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OLD TESTAMENT HISTORY

II

FROM THE RED SEA TO RUTH

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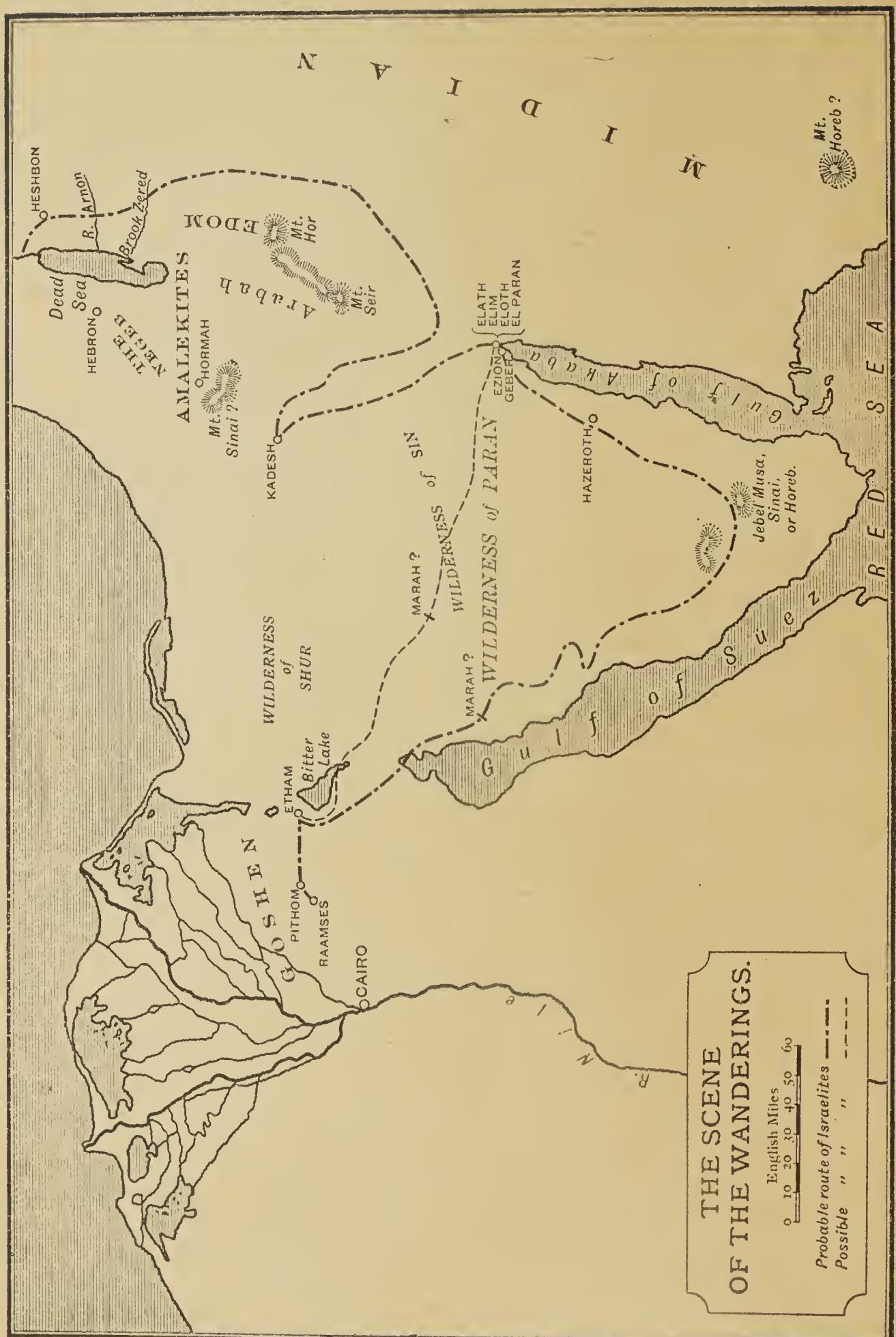
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OLD TESTAMENT HISTORY FROM THE RED SEA TO RUTH

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PREFACE

THE aim of this series may be stated briefly. It is an attempt to combine the advantages of a general history with those of the ordinary commentary: the former is open to the charge that it does not make the reader familiar with the language of the Bible; while the latter is too often overloaded with notes, and does not cover sufficient ground.

Practical experience has shown that the Old Testament may conveniently be divided into five periods, each containing enough matter to occupy one school term. Without laying claim to any credit for originality, the editors have tried to keep certain definite aims in view—the chronological sequence of events, the historical setting of the narrative, the use of the words of the Bible wherever possible, and (in the later volumes) illustration from the Prophets and other portions of the Scriptures.

Two sketch-maps have been included, for the preparation of which the editors are indebted to their pupils, S. F. Gooden and G. A. Cattley.

Frequent reference should also be made by the reader to good maps of the surrounding countries, and the editors particularly recommend *Murray's Handy Classical Maps, Palestine*.

It has been impossible in the commentary altogether to avoid the use of technical terms and other words which may be unfamiliar to the youngest reader. These have,

PREFACE

however, in many cases been explained where they occur: in cases where they have not, the reader's difficulty will best be met by an appeal to his form-master.

Mr. C. E. M. Hawkesworth has been good enough to read laboriously through all the proofs, and many improvements are due to his admirable judgment.

A list of the principal works of which the editors have made use in compiling this volume is given below in the table of abbreviations. To the authors of these works they gratefully acknowledge their obligations.

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PRINCIPAL ABBREVIATIONS EMPLOYED IN THIS VOLUME

D The Deuteronomic school of writers (7th cent.), see pp. xvii, 24.
Dr. Deut.	...	Dr. Driver's <i>Commentary upon the Book of Deuteronomy</i> : International Critical Commentary, 3rd Ed., 1902.
Dr. Gen.	..	Dr. Driver's <i>Commentary upon the Book of Genesis</i> : Westminster Commentaries, 4th Ed., 1905.
Dr. L.O.T.	..	Dr. Driver's <i>Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament</i> , 1891 Edition.
E	..	The Elohistic prophetic writer (8th cent.), see p. xvi.
H	..	The Law of Holiness (Lev. xvii.-xxvi.), see p. 26.
J	..	The Jehovahistic prophetic writer (9th cent.), see p. xv.
McN. Ex.	..	Mr. A. H. McNeile's <i>Commentary upon the Book of Exodus</i> : Westminster Commentaries, 1908.
Murray's I.B.D.		<i>Murray's Illustrated Bible Dictionary</i> (1908), Edited by Rev. W. C. Piercy.
Ott.	..	Canon Ottley's <i>History of the Hebrews</i> .
P	..	The Priestly school of writers (5th cent.), see pp. xvii, 26.

THE CALENDAR OF THE JEWISH YEAR

ORDER IN THE		MONTH.	ENGLISH EQUIVALENT, APPROXIMATELY.
CIVIL YEAR.*	SACRED YEAR.*		
7	i.	Nisan or Abib.	April.
8	ii.	Iyyar or Ziv.	May.
9	iii.	Sivan.	June.
10	iv.	Tammuz.	July.
11	v.	Ab.	August.
12	vi.	Elul.	September.
1	vii.	Tishri or Ethanim.	October.
2	viii.	Marcheshvan or Bul	November.
3	ix.	Chisleu.	December.
4	x.	Tebeth.	January.
5	xi.	Shebat.	February.
6	xii.	Adar.	March.

* The "civil" year is the older Hebrew year, which began in autumn. But in early days, before the Exile, the Babylonian calendar, by which the year began in spring, was also in use in Palestine. This latter calendar was adopted for ritual purposes, and the festivals were arranged according to it. Therefore the year according to this computation is called the "sacred" year.

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

IN the course of the period covered by this book we are to trace the development of the Israelites from a horde of fugitive nomads, united by (1) the leadership of Moses, (2) community of blood, (3) the worship of Jehovah (Yahweh), into a more highly organised nation, of settled abode, and occupied with mercantile and agricultural pursuits. We can trace their progress in civilisation and culture, which suffered a set-back in the age of the Judges, but was quickened by contact with the older civilisation of the Canaanitish peoples whom they conquered and displaced. It will be seen how the elaborate codes of civil,¹ moral, and ceremonial law contained in the Pentateuch were the growth of centuries long subsequent to the time of Moses himself. Yet the source from which they sprang was the simple legislation of their ancient leader at the Mount and in the desert. Above all, there is exhibited in these opening books of the Bible, as clearly as in any volume of the Old Testament, the progressive

¹ Civil law regulates the behaviour of men to each other in society—e.g. Exod. xxi. 2 : a male slave is to be set free without ransom in his seventh year.

Moral law tells men not what they *must* do, but what they *ought* to do if they wish to be good—e.g. “Thou shall not covet.”

Ceremonial law arranges the rites and methods of sacrifice, worship, purification, etc.—e.g. lepers must be declared clean by the priest.

revelation of God to man, the consummation of which in the Incarnation of our Lord is no less emphatically, though often unconsciously, foreshadowed, typified, demanded, than it is in the books of the Prophets. The Pentateuch displays the advance of the Hebrews from monolatry to monotheism ; that is, from an acknowledgement of Jehovah as their tribal protector and God to the knowledge of Him as the one spiritual and universal Saviour and God. In a word, the history of Israel as portrayed in these books is the story of the "continuous illustration" of the Divine name Jehovah—"I will be what I will be."

But in order that the younger student may be able intelligently to appreciate the narrative, his patience must be tasked by the brief consideration of certain preliminary questions. He must consider, and will naturally claim to consider, the nature, origin, and authority of the Bible records—

- (a) Who wrote them ?
- (b) When ? and from what original sources ?
- (c) What is their value as history ?
- (d) What is their religious value ?
- (e) What is meant by their inspiration ?

Otherwise he will neither understand the Old Testament nor find in it the record of that religious experience which is presupposed in the New, and which alike explains and is explained by the New. It is therefore obligatory upon the editor of an elementary text to provide, in the simplest language, an outline of the teaching of modern scholars upon these points.¹

¹ "It ought assuredly to be possible so to teach the historical parts of the O.T. to those who have reached the age of 15 or 16 that,

(a) *Authorship of the Pentateuch*¹

Prefixed to each of the books of the Pentateuch in the English versions of the Bible, though not in the Hebrew original nor in the Greek version, is the title “The —th book of Moses called —.” This does not mean that Moses was the writer of these books, but that he and his work are the subject of them. Yet in the time of our Lord, and until five-and-twenty years ago, it was generally taught, and occasionally is taught still, that Moses was their author. Apart from the difficulty of making Moses describe his own death and burial (Deut. xxxiv.), which this theory necessitates—if interpreted with literal precision—it is clear to any one before he has read far in them that neither Moses nor any one single author could have produced these books. If, for example, the book of Genesis was written by one author as it stands, how is it that he gives, e.g., two different accounts of the Creation (Gen. i. and Gen. ii. 4 *seq.*), and two contradictory explanations of the origin of the name Bethel (Gen. xxviii. 19 and xxxv. 15) ? If Exodus is by one author, why does he describe the dedication of the jar of manna “before the Testimony” when the Testimony had not yet been given (Exod. xvi. 34) ? Or, if the author of Genesis was also the author of Exodus,

when they enter into manhood, they may have *nothing to unlearn* on the ground of either science or history” (Dr. *Gen.* lxvi.). For a shorter statement of these questions the reader is referred to vol. i. of this series, pp. xiii *seq.*

¹ Pentateuch (Gk. πέντε = 5, τεῦχος = instrument or book), called in the Hebrew “Torah,” is the name given to the first five books of the O.T. With the book of Joshua these are called the Hexateuch (ἕξ = 6): and the considerations as to the authorship of the Pentateuch apply also to the book of Joshua, which has a similar origin. For a most instructive and interesting demonstration of the application of the critical methods here sketched in outline the reader is referred to the introductions to such works as Dr. *Gen.* or Dr. *Deut.*

how does he come to speak of God as Jehovah from the Creation onwards, whereas he expressly tells us in Exod. vi. 2 that God did not reveal his name Jehovah until the time of Moses ? Again, if the authors of Exodus and Deuteronomy are the same, why does Exodus encourage numerous altars to be raised to God, while Deuteronomy emphatically forbids this practice (Exod. xx. 24 and Deut. xii.) ? Instances such as these of discrepancy or of contradiction in the accounts both of events and of laws are numerous throughout the Pentateuch. Moreover, when we come to deal with the legislative records (below, p. 21) we shall see that there are five distinct codes of law in these books, each differing from the others, some far more comprehensive than the others, and each applicable to the circumstances, and reflecting the ideas, of a given period in the history of Israel, but not all alike applicable to the condition of the Hebrews at Mount Sinai, when Moses first legislated for them. We are led, therefore, by the examination of the subject-matter of these books to conclude that different portions of these are the work of different writers at different dates.

To a similar conclusion Hebrew scholars who are competent to judge have been driven by an analysis of the literary and linguistic¹ phenomena of the Pentateuch. There are passages in Exodus—and the other books—differing from each other in style and vocabulary as much perhaps as, to us, the style and vocabulary of Bacon differ

¹ Literary, *i.e.* connected with the manner which the writer adopts : *e.g.* one of the writers in the Pentateuch is formal and precise, like a lawyer ; another is flowing and expansive, like an artist or a poet.

Linguistic, *i.e.* connected with the choice of words : *e.g.* one writer repeatedly uses the words " Elohim " and " generations," another avoids them.

from the style and vocabulary of Macaulay. It is impossible that two such divergent styles could have proceeded from one and the same author. Even in the English translation the more pronounced features of the various styles are apparent to the reader.

These two classes of phenomena, then, (a) the historical, (b) the literary, observed in the Pentateuch, compel the reader to the conclusion that the books are composite in structure; that is, that the writings of several authors of different dates have been pieced together by an editor or editors (often called also "compilers," and "redactors") into the form which they now bear in the Bible, and did bear in the Hebrew Bible in the time of our Lord. We have now to see, in a little more detail, who and what these writers were.

- (b) *The Constituent Narratives of the Pentateuch*

By the cautious and reverent application of these two principles of historical and literary criticism, which their material forced upon them, experts have disengaged four principal documents and some two or three secondary sources from which the Pentateuch has been constituted.

I. Of these documents the oldest is that of an historian of probably the ninth century B.C. From his preference for the name Jehovah, rather than the title Elohim, for God, he is known as J. Making use of, and including in the text of his work, various older collections of literary fragments, which were mostly poetical in form, he was the first to compose a continuous history of his people. His work, like that of the succeeding writer, was the outcome of the teaching and the labours of the 'schools of the

prophets,' about whom we read in the early years of the monarchy. He lived probably in Judah. "Of all the Hebrew historians whose writings have been preserved to us, J is the most gifted and the most brilliant. He excels in the power of delineating life and character. His touch is singularly light: with a few strokes he paints a scene which impresses itself indelibly upon his reader's memory. In ease and grace his narratives are unsurpassed: everything is told with precisely the amount of detail that is required; the narrative never lingers, and the reader's interest is sustained to the end. He writes without effort and without conscious art."¹ (See, for illustration, Gen. iii. or Exod. xxxiii. 12—xxxiv. 10, p. 57, in this volume.)

2. The next writer, who in many ways resembles J, is called E, from his employment of the title Elohim. He is rather more recent than J, is dated in the early part of the eighth century B.C., and probably lived in the Northern Kingdom. These two writers, since they embody "many of the religious ideas of which the great Hebrew prophets afterwards became the exponents," are called the *prophetic* writers. The student will observe that they precede the first of the *literary* prophets whose works we have, viz. Amos and Hosea.

By the middle of the seventh century these two histories had been combined into a composite narrative, JE.

3. Meanwhile the voices of these four great prophets—Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, and Micah—had given a new impetus to the religious thought and life of the nation. The result was the promulgation of an expanded code of the laws, a code based on the earlier legislation contained in JE,

¹ Dr. Gen., p. xiv.

but far wider in its scope and more highly developed in the religious and social ideals which it upholds. This is the "book of the law" which was found in Josiah's reign (621 B.C.), having been composed some twenty-five years previously and laid aside. It forms the main portion of the book of Deuteronomy. Afterwards it was provided with an historic setting, which recounted anew, from the newer point of view, and with several additions, the history of the past as given before by JE. Thus a revised and enlarged version of Israelitish history and legislation was published, and—the new writer and the subsequent redactor being known as D—the result was a volume now termed JED.¹

4. From this time onwards the inspired teaching of the successive prophets continuously brought home to the Hebrews a deeper knowledge and more spiritual conception of God, a profounder interpretation of their past and present history, and a wider perception of what was required of them in their religious, social, and moral behaviour. At last, when Judah had been led into exile in Babylonia, the priests set vigorously to work upon the historical and legislative records which had come down to them. They recast the whole in the light of their newer knowledge; especially they idealised the part played by their priestly forerunners in the past, and in their expansion of the code of laws gave special prominence to the ceremonial and religious features. The issue of their work is seen soon after the Return from captivity in the final production of the Pentateuch (5th cent. B.C.). Their own particular additions are distinguished, from the fact of their being the Priestly school of writers, as P; and the four main documents

¹ See further below, Part II., esp. pp. 24 6.

in combination are thus denoted by the symbols JEDP. In addition, there are a few secondary portions, distinguished by other symbols, which are not derived from any of these four sources.

From this sketch it will be tolerably clear how the Pentateuch (and in fact Joshua with it, though this book was placed by the Jews in the second volume of their Bible), came to be compiled. The reader will thus be able correctly to account for the inconsistencies in it—inconsistencies which naturally escaped the notice of the compilers, but which are plain and explicable to us. He will, moreover, understand how the Pentateuch in its various elements reflects and embraces the religious and social ideas, not of the time of Moses, but of the time when the successive compilations were made. He will be able to trace in it the development of the knowledge of God and the gradual revelation of God's nature and will to mankind, just as he can trace it in the works of the prophets themselves: for the teaching of the prophets is exhibited in its most concrete form in the legislative and historical records of the Hexateuch.

(c) The Historical Value of the Pentateuch

For an account of events to be accepted as historically exact it must satisfy the two main canons: (1) that it must originate from a time contemporaneous, or nearly so, with the events which it relates; (2) that it must be consistent with itself.

(1) First let us test our records by the first canon. Though the art of writing was in use among the Hebrews from an early date, before the Exodus, and though numerous poems, ballads, and the deeds of the heroes (*cf.* the Book

of Jasher)¹ were committed to writing before the ninth century B.C., yet we have seen that none of the versions of Hebrew history from which the Pentateuch was compiled was in existence until many centuries after the Exodus and many more centuries after Abraham and his predecessors. The first canon, therefore, is not satisfied in this case.

(2) At the same time, though the compilation as a whole presents manifest inconsistencies, many of the stories are consistent with themselves, *e.g.* the account of the Hebrew migration into Egypt. And much of the subject-matter bears upon its general features the stamp of historical truth; *e.g.* the personality and work of Moses must have been much what they are related to have been, since otherwise the subsequent history of the Hebrew nation cannot be accounted for or explained. Moreover, tradition would undeniably have preserved intact, though overgrown by later enlargements, many of the actual incidents of the early career of the nation. In its outlines, therefore, the record before us may be regarded as grounded upon an historical basis. But in detail we can observe that (1) the writers idealise their past, *i.e.* they imagine it to have been more glorious than it was; and (2) they read into the past many of the ideas and customs and religious beliefs of their own age; (3) they write with a didactic purpose, *i.e.* they set out to teach and reform their contemporaries by drawing a verbal picture of older times *with a moral attached*; (4) the two latter documents, D and P, are and profess to be historical in *form* only: in substance they are bodies of laws—moral, social, and religious—which are roughly cast into an

¹ See below, p. 121.

historical setting, and published for purposes of legal and moral instruction.

(d) The Religious Value of the Pentateuch

Revelation *non facit per saltum*—it does not work by leaps and bounds, any more than nature does. It was by slow degrees and through long centuries that God showed Himself to man through the people whom He had chosen for His purpose. It is because the Pentateuch essentially delineates this gradual divine revelation in diverse parts and in diverse ways—πολυμερῶς καὶ πολυτρόπως—not because it incidentally sketches a shadowy outline of the past, that its value is inestimable. As God became more and more clearly known to the Jews through (a) the events of their national life and philosophic reflection upon them, (b) the teaching of the prophets directly conscious of a message from Him, so in the successive documents of the Pentateuch we can see this development portrayed.

To the nomad horde who worshipped Jehovah as their God but yet recognised the existence of other gods, Moses gave the moral laws dictated by his consciousness that it was God's nature to care, not only how His people prospered, but what manner of men they were: character, even in those days, was to be proved by the discipline of suffering. Up to the time of J and E God is still spoken of in freely anthropomorphic¹ language: the knowledge of Him and the worship of Him are only slowly developing. By the date of D a new body of laws is necessitated to express

¹ *I.e.* God, though a spiritual Being, is spoken of in language which is really only applicable to man. So also the Greeks and Romans used to speak of their gods as though they were men on a larger scale.

the newer attitude of the people towards God. He is the only God, a pure and spiritual Being who loves Israel and is to be loved. Israel is a holy nation and must act as such ; love must be the determining principle of their conduct to God and man. The religious worship of God is to be purified and extended accordingly.¹ In P the ceremonial to be observed is further elaborated and the social and civil laws again modified to accord with what God requires of His servants. God is a Spirit, who dwells among His people ; His presence is real to them. Hence the circumstantial description of the Mosaic Tabernacle. Yet His holiness and unapproachableness must be safeguarded by the intercession of the priests. Hence the prominence given to the priestly orders in P. All this elaborate observance " contributed to the great central thought, the magnificent ideal which had yet to be realised in the Christian Church—a perfectly organised Body, consecrated to the God whose glory tabernacles in their midst."²

The religion of the Pentateuch can only be rightly studied in connexion with the books of the prophets : this volume, however, affords no space to illustrate how closely the moral and religious teaching found in the Pentateuch is related to them.

(e) *The Inspiration of the Old Testament*

(i) Formerly we used to be taught that *because* the Old Testament is inspired, *therefore* it contains a true revelation of God to man. But how did we know that it *was* inspired ? And what was inspiration thought

¹ Dr. *Deut.* xxv.

² McN. *Ex.* cxxv.

to mean? It was making an assumption to say "the book is inspired, therefore. . . ." You must *prove* your first premise, viz. the inspiration of the book, before you can justify the conclusion based on it, viz. the revelation it contains. Whereas, if you know on other grounds that the Old Testament does contain a true revelation, your conclusion that therefore it was inspired is a just one. It is therefore a more reasonable and a truer account of the matter to say that *because* the Old Testament contains a true revelation of God to man *therefore* it is inspired.

For we do know, at least we Christians know, that the Old Testament contains a true revelation. This is proved by (a) the historical fact of the Incarnation of the Son of God, which explains and completes the anticipations and beliefs of the pre-Christian Hebrews, shows that what the Hebrews had believed and known of God was a right belief and knowledge, and makes it clear that all the previous history of the nation was a period of preparation for this crowning event; (b) the fact that Christ accepted the teaching of the Old Testament about God and Himself to have been correct teaching, though partial only and only partly understood; (c) the fact that the moral teaching of the Old Testament writers more nearly satisfied the conscience of man than the moral teaching of any other teachers before Christ. It answers the question "What is right, and why is it right?" by saying, "This and that are right because God is what He is." The highest pagan philosophy had never given, nor could give, such an answer as this. The intellectual speculations of Greek thinkers had never been able to teach that right is right because "this" is the will of God. And if it is asked why the Hebrew teachers were right in saying "This

is the will of God " and how we know they were right, the answer is already given in (a) and (b) : Christ proved it.

(ii) It is clear, then, that the Old Testament gives a true revelation of God ; therefore we are right in concluding that it is an inspired book ; that is, the teachers whose instructions moulded the Hebrew polity and whose teaching (*i.e.* in the books of the prophets) or the result of whose teaching (*i.e.* in the Pentateuch and other historical books) is given us in the Old Testament, were directly made conscious by God, as no other teachers in any other nation had been, of His character and will. By a comparison of the historical, political, and moral conditions of the Hebrews with those both of other nations of different race and of other tribes of the same race and in similar circumstances, it has been proved by scholars that this knowledge of God and the consequent moral development of the tribe cannot otherwise be accounted for than by a special, conscious, and deliberate selection of this tribe by God as the peculiar instrument through which to manifest Himself.¹ Unless this selection and the consequent Divine manifestation were a fact, the fundamental difference of the history of the Hebrews from that of all other tribes is simply inexplicable. Thus we see that the Old Testament does contain a revelation and that it is inspired.

(iii) Inspiration does not mean, however, a verbal or mechanical process. We have no grounds in reason for imagining, and certainly the Bible nowhere suggests, that every word of the Scriptures was dictated by God, or that the Old Testament is meant to teach exact history or exact

¹ See G. Adam Smith, *Modern Criticism and the Preaching of the O.T.*, Lect. IV.

science. The writers of the Old Testament are human instruments conveying, under the limitations of knowledge which were incident to their age, religious truth, not historical and scientific instruction. History and science were then in their infancy. It follows, therefore, that whereas the religious teaching of the Old Testament is of permanent value to us though only advancing towards the full truth slowly and progressively, the scientific and historical setting are, naturally, often and incurably at fault. The scriptural definition of inspiration as given by St. Paul (2 Tim. iii. 16) is this: "Every scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training which is in righteousness." Inspired writing, then, teaches morals and religion, not science and history; and the Old Testament conforms to this canon. The old *a priori* theory—that is, a theory which first of all gratuitously lays down what inspiration is to mean, viz. verbal and mechanical dictation from the lips of God, and then proceeds to insist that the Bible must and does conform to it—is as absurd in reason as it is devoid of authority.¹

¹ For one or two further points see Appendixes II. and III.

PART I

FROM THE RED SEA TO SINAI

INTRODUCTORY

DATE OF THE EXODUS: ABOUT 1214 B.C., IN THE REIGN OF
THE EGYPTIAN KING MERENPTAH, 19TH DYNASTY

WHEN reading the story of the Hebrews' journey both to Sinai and thenceforward through the desert, the student must be content to wander in a wilderness of geographical uncertainties. Modern explorers and archæologists, by means of untiring perseverance, and by their skill in drawing conclusions, have indeed identified with reasonable certainty the sites of Pithom and Raamses, Succoth and Etham, and the position of the land of Goshen (to the north-east of Cairo, and west of Long. 32 E.).¹ The scene, moreover, of the passage through the sea, which was opportunely assisted, under the divine guidance, by the natural rising of a strong south-east wind, can be traced either at the top of the Gulf of Suez, or rather further north—at the southern end of the Bitter Lake, through which the course of the present canal runs. But, once across the sea, there are no authoritative finger-posts to guide us. There are two theories about the route followed by the Hebrews. (1) A tradition, dating from the third century A.D., identifies Mount Sinai with Jebel Musa, lying towards the southern point of the

¹ Archæology—*i.e.* the discovery and the scientific dating and explaining of ancient remains—has testified to the accuracy of the geographical and antiquarian knowledge of the Biblical writers. But naturally it cannot be expected to confirm in detail the account of the Wanderings.

triangular peninsula which splits the Red Sea into the Gulfs of Suez and Akāba. If this identification be correct, the march of the Israelites will have taken first a south-easterly direction and then, after leaving the Sacred Mount, a northerly direction through Ezion-geber (at the head of the Gulf of Akāba) to Kadesh. To this view certain objections of weight are offered by critics, for the enumeration of which this volume affords no space.¹ One theory, however, may perhaps be mentioned. It has often been asserted that the Israelites would not have marched south-east through the peninsula because there was always a garrison of their enemies, the Egyptians, stationed as a guard over the mines in that quarter, into whose arms the fugitives would thus have delivered themselves. This objection has been adequately met. Prof. Petrie has shown that the establishment of this garrison was not permanent, but a device only occasionally employed. The Exodus, therefore, may well have fallen at a period when the garrison was not posted. (2) Some scholars hold that the route of the Hebrews led directly across the north of the Sinaitic peninsula eastwards from Suez to Eloth (hard by Ezion-geber), with which Elim (Exod. xv. 27, Num. xxxiii. 9) is then to be identified. In this case Sinai must be placed further north, close to Kadesh and almost on the borders of Edom.

Some additional difficulty is caused by the fact that Mount Sinai is also called Mount Horeb by the Biblical writers; the two names are interchangeable for the same locality. J and P prefer the former name, while D and E uniformly employ the latter.² There

¹ See Mc.N. *Ex.*, Introd., § 6, for a highly interesting examination of the whole topographical problem.

² For the explanation of the symbols J, E, etc., see pp. xv. seq.

are, it is true, a few passages in the text which seem to distinguish Horeb from Sinai, and to require Horeb to be placed somewhere to the south of Midian, and on the east side of the Gulf of Akāba. But these are not of sufficient importance to upset the accepted view.

The caravan under Moses' leadership is stated more than once in the Bible text to have consisted of over 600,000 men. With women and children, the whole horde must have reached nearly two million souls. That this number is far too large is obvious ; moreover, it is inconsistent with the "three score and ten" (Gen. xlvi. 27) who had formed the nucleus of the Hebrew population in Egypt only 430 years previously, according to the Biblical chronology. Seventy would not multiply into two millions in that time. It is a common characteristic of ancient authors to exaggerate numbers : Herodotus, for example, tells us that Xerxes brought five million followers with him in his invasion of Greece. We must be satisfied to leave the numbers of the Hebrews on their pilgrimage to conjecture. Moses was the leader, lawgiver, and priest of the people, assisted by Joshua and Aaron. It is only the latest of the writers in the Pentateuch who describes Aaron as the great priest and the co-equal of Moses ; the earlier authorities make him merely a prominent member of the tribe.

Synopsis of Moses' life.—Three periods of forty years each.

- A. (see vol. i.). 1. Born in Egypt ; of tribe of Levi.
2. Adopted by Pharaoh's (Ramses II.) daughter ; elaborate education (Acts vii.). 3. Killed an Egyptian oppressor and fled to Midian.

6 FROM THE RED SEA TO THE WILDERNESS

B. (vol. i.). Forty years in Midian. 1. Married Zippōrah. 2. Commissioned by God "in the bush" to deliver his countrymen. 3. Met Aaron, his spokesman, and returned to Egypt. 4. The plagues and Exodus. 5. Legislation at Sinai (see below). .

C. (see below). 1. The Wanderings in the Wilderness. 2. Warned that he will not reach the Promised Land himself. 3. Conquest of the land east of Jordan. 4. Death, aged 120.

His Functions.—(1) Leader, (2) Prophet, (3) Teacher, (4) Lawgiver, (5) Instrument of the (Old) Covenant (pp. 50, 51 below), (6) Mediator.

Personal Characteristics.—Of these the most noticeable are (1) Perseverance in spite of repulse and rejection by his people (see below, and *Acts vii.*); (2) Self-sacrifice; (3) Meekness (*Num. xii. 3*).

FROM THE RED SEA TO ELIM

Exodus xv. 22-25, 27

22. So Moses brought Israel from the Red sea, and they went out into the wilderness of Shur; and they went three days in the wilderness, and found no water.

Healing of the waters at Marah.—23. And when they came to Marah, they could not drink of the waters of Marah, for they were bitter: therefore the name of it was called Marah. 24. And the people murmured against Moses, saying, What shall we drink? 25. And he cried

22. **Shur.** The wilderness of Shur is also called the wilderness of Etham. Shur means "wall" and Etham means "fortress": and the wilderness derives its name from the line of fortresses and frontier walls which in ancient times ran along the Isthmus of Suez.

23. **Marah** = bitterness.

25. The reader will observe here, and frequently throughout this volume, the omission of paragraphs, verses, and parts of verses from

unto the LORD ; and the LORD shewed him a tree, which, when he had cast into the waters, the waters were made sweet.

27. And they came to Elim, where were twelve wells of water, and threescore and ten palm trees : and they encamped there by the waters.

THE WILDERNESS OF SIN AND THE MANNA

Exodus xvi

1. And they took their journey from Elim, and all the congregation of the children of Israel came unto the wilderness of Sin, which is between Elim and Sinai, on the fifteenth day of the second month after their departing out of the land of Egypt. 2. And the whole congregation of the

the original Bible text. If he has mastered the considerations urged in the Introduction as to the composite character of the narrative he will readily understand that the reason for the omissions is either (1) that the verses in question interrupt the continuity and intelligibility of the story, or (2) that they have no real connection with the events under discussion, having been wrongly introduced into this place by the compiler, or (3) that they are legal or hortatory in character (*i.e.* they give exhortation or advice), and have therefore been excluded by the editors in accordance with the scheme of this book, though they will have come under consideration, and perhaps have been quoted, in Part II., where an outline of the legal portions of the Pentateuch is given.

The LORD, when thus printed in capitals = Jehovah, God's name, which is thus rendered in the A.V.

27. **Elim** = the terebinths or turpentine-trees. This kind of tree was "supposed by the ancient Canaanites to give oracles, and was attended by priests, who interpreted its answers to those who came to consult it" (Dr. *Gen.* 146). Cf. the Greek oracle at Dodona, etc. Elim, according to one theory of the route, is to be placed at the head of the Gulf of Akāba ; see p. 4.

1. **Sin.** Num. xxxiii. 10 records between Elim and Sinai an encampment by Yam Sūph, the "reedy sea," *i.e.* on the Gulf of Akāba. This lends colour to the easterly theory of the route taken. But the distinction between the two arms of the Red Sea seems not to have been clearly understood by the writers of the narratives.

children of Israel murmured against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness: 3. and the children of Israel said unto them, Would to God we had died by the hand of the LORD in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the flesh pots, and when we did eat bread to the full; for ye have brought us forth into this wilderness, to kill this whole assembly with hunger.

God promises food.—4. Then said the LORD unto Moses, Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a *day's portion* every day, that I may prove them, whether they will walk in my law, or no. 5. And it shall come to pass, that on the sixth day they shall prepare that which they bring in; and it shall be twice as much as they gather daily.

9. And Moses spake unto Aaron, Say unto all the congregation of the children of Israel, Come near before the LORD: for he hath heard your murmurings. 10. And it came to pass, as Aaron spake unto the whole congregation of the children of Israel, that they looked toward the wilderness, and, behold, the glory of the LORD appeared in the cloud. 11. And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, 12. I have heard the murmurings of the children of Israel: speak unto them, saying, At even ye shall eat flesh, and in the morning ye shall be filled with bread; and ye shall know that I am the LORD your God. 6. And Moses and Aaron said unto all the children of Israel, At even, then ye shall know that the LORD hath brought you out from the land of Egypt: 7. and in the morning, then ye shall see

3. *flesh pots*, *i.e.* we enjoyed comparative luxury in Egypt, having meat to eat.

4. Words and short passages are occasionally introduced into the text from the R.V. or other modern versions in order to give the right sense. Such insertions have generally been marked by *italics*.

the glory of the LORD; for that he heareth your murmurings against the LORD: and what are we, that ye murmur against us? 8. Your murmurings are not against us but against the LORD.

Manna is given.—13. And it came to pass, that in the morning the dew lay round about the host. 14. And when the dew that lay was gone up, behold, upon the face of the wilderness there lay a small round thing, as small as the hoar frost on the ground. 15. And when the children of Israel saw it, they said one to another, *What is it?* for they wist not what it was. And Moses said unto them, This is the bread which the LORD hath given you to eat.

Its character: only one day's supply must be gathered.—16. This is the thing which the LORD hath commanded, Gather of it every man according to his eating, an omer for every man, according to the number of your persons; take ye every man for them which are in his tents. 17. And the children of Israel did so, and gathered, some more, some less. 18. And when they did mete it with an omer, he that gathered much had nothing over, and he that gathered

13. The mention of quails also has here crept by mistake into the (complete) text. Quails were sent, according to the more authoritative account of J, after the departure from Sinai. See *infra*, p. 66.

15. Heb. *man hu* = what is it? Hence in verse 31 the substance is called manna. It is not known whether this substance may have been "an exudation from the tamarisk-tree, or a species of oak-honey, or an edible lichen." The text gives a circumstantial description of its properties. Whether it was a natural phenomenon or not, the Biblical account of it treats it as miraculous altogether.

18. gathered much, *i.e.* gathered many omers because he had a large family, one omer for each member. When they collected it they measured it, taking care to gather just an omer per head, and thus "caused" (not "had") to themselves neither surplus nor lack. An omer is rather more than a bushel. For St. Paul's use of this verse see 2 Cor. viii. 15.

little had no lack ; they gathered every man according to his eating. 19. And Moses said, Let no man leave of it till the morning. 20. Notwithstanding they hearkened not unto Moses ; but some of them left of it until the morning, and it bred worms, and stank : and Moses was wroth with them. 21. And they gathered it every morning, every man according to his eating : and when the sun waxed hot, it melted.

Except on Friday, in preparation for the Sabbath.—22.
 And it came to pass, that on the sixth day they gathered twice as much bread, two omers for one man : and all the rulers of the congregation came and told Moses. 23. And he said unto them, This is that which the **LORD** hath said, To morrow is the rest of the holy sabbath unto the **LORD** : bake that which ye will bake to day, and seethe that ye will seethe ; and that which remaineth over lay up for you to be kept until the morning. 24. And they laid it up till the morning, as Moses bade : and it did not stink, neither was there any worm therein. 25. And Moses said, Eat that to day ; for to day is a sabbath unto the **LORD** : to day ye shall not find it in the field. 26. Six days ye shall gather it ; but on the seventh day, which is the sabbath, in it there shall be none. 27. And it came to pass, that there went out some of the people on the seventh day for to gather, and they found none. 28. And the **LORD** said unto Moses, How long refuse ye to keep my commandments and my laws ? 29. See, for that the **LORD** hath given you the sabbath, therefore he giveth you on the sixth day the bread of two days ; abide ye every man in his place, let no man go out of his

23. **sabbath.** See p. 27.

seethe = boil : its past tense is *sod*.

place on the seventh day. 30. So the people rested on the seventh day. 31. And the house of Israel called the name thereof Manna: and it was like coriander seed, white; and the taste of it was like wafers made with honey. Num. xi. 8. And the people went about and gathered it, and ground it in mills, or beat it in a mortar, and baked it in pans, and made cakes of it: and the taste of it was as of a dainty prepared with oil.

A memorial vase full of manna is to be placed in the Holy of Holies, in the Tabernacle.—Ex. xvi. 32. And Moses said, This is the thing which the LORD commandeth, Fill an omer of it to be kept for your generations; that they may see the bread wherewith I have fed you in the wilderness, when I brought you forth from the land of Egypt. 33. And Moses said unto Aaron, Take a pot, and put an omer full of manna therein, and lay it up before the LORD, to be kept for your generations. 34. As the LORD commanded Moses, so Aaron laid it up before the Testimony, to be kept. 35. And the children of Israel did eat manna forty years, until they came to a land inhabited: they did eat manna, until they came unto the borders of the land of Canaan.

REPHIDIM, MASSAH-MERIBAH, AND THE BATTLE WITH THE AMALEKITES

Exodus xvii

Moses brings water from the rock.—1. And all the congregation of the children of Israel journeyed from the

31. *Coriander* is an annual plant with a strong-smelling seed about the size of a peppercorn.

34. *I.e.* he laid it in front of the Ark, which contained the Testimony, or tablets inscribed with the Decalogue. This passage shows that the story of the coming of the manna should have more rightly been placed by the compiler *after* the arrival at Sinai. The historian has not yet narrated the giving of the Testimony nor the building of the Tabernacle and the Ark. See *infra*, pp. 38 seq., 51.

wilderness of Sin, after their journeys, according to the commandment of the LORD, and pitched in Rephidim: and there was no water for the people to drink. 2. Wherefore the people did chide with Moses, and said, Give us water that we may drink. And Moses said unto them, Why chide ye with me? wherefore do ye tempt the LORD? 3. And the people thirsted there for water; and the people murmured against Moses, and said, Wherefore is this that thou hast brought us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and our cattle with thirst? 4. And Moses cried unto the LORD, saying, What shall I do unto this people? they be almost ready to stone me. 5. And the LORD said unto Moses, Go on before the people, and take with thee of the elders of Israel; and thy rod, wherewith thou smotest the river, take in thine hand, and go. 6. Behold, I will stand before thee there upon the rock in Horeb; and thou shalt smite the rock, and there shall come water out of it, that the people may drink. And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel. 7. And he called the name of the place Massah, and Meribah, because of the chiding of the children of Israel, and because they tempted the LORD, saying, Is the LORD among us, or not?

6. **Horeb** = Sinai. Among the haggādhoth, or traditional legends, collected at a later day by the Scribes, was one which related how the rock and the spring which Moses drew from it followed the Israelites into Canaan. This is the legend to which St. Paul gives a religious interpretation in 1 Cor. x. 4.

7. **Massah** = tempting, **Meribah** = strife. Cf. Ps. xcv. 8, 9. We shall come presently (Num. xx.) to another incident of a similar character to this, the scene of which is likewise called Meribah. It is clear, on many grounds, that the compiler has intermingled some of the circumstances of the later post-Sinai occurrence, and especially the name Meribah, with this pre-Sinai event, the scene of which is elsewhere called simply Massah, not by the double name Massah-Meribah (Deut. vi. 16; ix. 22).

Victory over the Amalekites at Jehovah-nissi.—8. Then came Amalek, and fought with Israel in Rephidim. 9. And Moses said unto Joshua, Choose us out men, and go out, fight with Amalek: to morrow I will stand on the top of the hill with the rod of God in mine hand. 10. So Joshua did as Moses had said to him, and fought with Amalek: and Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill. 11. And it came to pass, when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed: and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed. 12. But Moses' hands were heavy; and they took a stone, and put it under him, and he sat thereon; and Aaron and Hur stayed up his hands, the one on the one side, and the other on the other side; and his hands were steady until the going down of the sun. 13. And Joshua discomfited Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword. 14. And the LORD said unto Moses, Write this for a memorial in a book,

8. The encounter with the Amalekites is, like parts of the preceding paragraph and the visit of Jethro in the next paragraph, also referred by scholars, with good reason, to a period later than the sojourn at Sinai and to a scene nearer to Kadesh. These Amalekites were "a powerful, widely-dispersed tribe of nomads whose original home was in the desert of Paran" (Ott.), *i.e.* the Sinaitic peninsula. They predominated, however, rather in the district between Kadesh and Judah.

9. Joshua is here first mentioned. In xxiv. 13, xxxiii. 11 he is introduced as a young man, Moses' "minister."

rod of God. In chap. iv. 2 Moses is taught by Jehovah to use the shepherd's rod or staff which he bore for the performance of a sign to his fellow countrymen. In iv. 17 either this same staff, or another produced by Jehovah, is formally handed over to Moses as a badge of his office and an instrument for the manifestation of "signs."

10. Hur is only mentioned elsewhere in xxiv. 14. He was apparently one of the chiefs or sheikhs of the nomad Israelites.

11. Moses' attitude is that of prayer. The scene testifies to the power of prayer.

14. Moses would naturally have been taught to write *in* his youth *in* Egypt. "The beginnings of Hebrew writing cannot be traced

and rehearse it in the ears of Joshua: for I will utterly put out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven.

15. And Moses built an altar, and called the name of it Jehovah-nissi: 16. for he said, Because the LORD hath sworn that the LORD will have war with Amalek from generation to generation.

THE VISIT OF JETHRO

Exodus xviii.; Numbers x. 29-32

1. When Jethro, the priest of Midian, Moses' father in law, heard of all that God had done for Moses, and for Israel his people, and that the LORD had brought Israel out of Egypt; 2. then Jethro, Moses' father in law, took Zipporah, Moses' wife, after he had sent her back, 3. and her two sons; of which the name of the one was Gershom; for he said, I have been an alien in a strange land: 4. and the name of the other was Eliezer; For the God of my father, said he, was mine help, and delivered me from the sword of Pharaoh: 5. and Jethro, Moses'

... at any rate it dates from a period long before the Exodus." (Mc. N. 103). The earliest known specimen, however, dates only from the tenth century B.C.

15. An altar is erected in accordance with the principle laid down in xx. 24. Such erections are frequently recorded as acts of piety, e.g. in the case of Abraham, Jacob, Gideon, David, and Solomon. But in Deuteronomy the practice is strictly forbidden (Deut. xii.). For explanation see *infra*, pp. 25 and 41. Jehovah-nissi = Jehovah is my banner.

16. For Amalekites *cf.* Saul's expedition in 1 Sam. xv.

1. There is some divergence of opinion in the different writers of the Hexateuch as to the name of Moses' father-in-law. The best explanation is that Jethro and Hobab are identical, and that Reuel, or Raguel, is the name of Jethro's father. Midian is the country to the east and north-east of the Gulf of Akāba. In Exod. iv. 20 Moses had taken his wife and sons to Egypt with him: in the meantime he has again entrusted them to Jethro's care ("after he had sent her back"). Zippōrah means "a bird"; Gershom is derived from Ger = "a sojourner" (*Cf.* Byron's *The Giaour*); Eliezer means "My God is a help."

father in law, came with his sons and his wife unto Moses into the wilderness, where he encamped at the mount of God.

Jethro makes a thank-offering for God's goodness to Israel.
—7. And Moses went out to meet his father in law, and did obeisance, and kissed him ; and they asked each other of their welfare ; and they came into the tent. 8. And Moses told his father in law all that the LORD had done unto Pharaoh and to the Egyptians for Israel's sake, and all the travail that had come upon them by the way, and how the LORD delivered them. 9. And Jethro rejoiced for all the goodness which the LORD had done to Israel, whom he had delivered out of the hand of the Egyptians. 10. And Jethro said, Blessed be the LORD, who hath delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians, and out of the hand of Pharaoh, who hath delivered the people from under the hand of the Egyptians. 11. Now I know that the LORD is greater than all gods : for in the thing wherein they dealt proudly he was above them. 12. And Jethro, Moses' father in law, took a burnt offering and sacrifices for God : and Aaron came, and all the elders of Israel, to eat bread with Moses' father in law before God.

He suggests methods of devolution of authority, which Moses adopts.—13. And it came to pass on the morrow, that Moses sat to judge the people : and the people stood by Moses from the morning unto the evening. 14. And when Moses' father in law saw all that he did to the people, he said, What is this thing that thou doest to the people ? why sittest thou thyself alone, and all the people stand by thee from morning unto even ? 15. And Moses said unto

11. The text is incomplete : it means " Yea, when the Egyptians dealt proudly with Israel the LORD was their saviour."

his father in law, Because the people come unto me to enquire of God : 16. when they have a matter, they come unto me ; and I judge between one and another, and I do make them know the statutes of God, and his laws. 17. And Moses' father in law said unto him, The thing that thou doest is not good. 18. Thou wilt surely wear away, both thou, and this people that is with thee : for this thing is too heavy for thee ; thou art not able to perform it thyself alone. 19. Hearken now unto my voice, I will give thee counsel, and God shall be with thee : Be thou for the people to God-ward, that thou mayest bring the causes unto God : 20. and thou shalt teach them ordinances and laws, and shalt shew them the way wherein they must walk, and the work that they must do. 21. Moreover thou shalt provide out of all the people able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness ; and place such over them, to be rulers of thousands, and rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens : 22. and let them judge the people at all seasons : and it shall be, that every great matter they shall bring unto thee, but every small matter they shall judge : so shall it be easier for thyself, and they shall bear the burden with thee. 23. If thou shalt do this thing, and God command thee so, then thou shalt be able to endure, and all this people shall also go to their place in peace. 24. So Moses hearkened to the voice of his father in law, and did all that he had said. 25. And Moses chose able men out of all Israel, and made them heads over the people, rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens. 26. And they judged the people at

19. to God-ward, *i.e.* "representing Him to the people, and the people to Him."

all seasons: the hard causes they brought unto Moses, but every small matter they judged themselves.

Though Moses entreats him to stay and guide them, he (apparently) departs.—Num. x. 29. And Moses said unto Hobab, the son of Raguel the Midianite, Moses' father in law, We are journeying unto the place of which the LORD said, I will give it you: come thou with us, and we will do thee good: for the LORD hath spoken good concerning Israel. 30. And he said unto him, I will not go; but I will depart to mine own land, and to my kindred. 31. And he said, Leave us not, I pray thee; forasmuch as thou knowest how we are to encamp in the wilderness, and thou mayest be to us instead of eyes. 32. And it shall be, if thou go with us, yea, it shall be, that what goodness the LORD shall do unto us, the same will we do unto thee.

Exod. xviii. 27. And Moses let his father in law depart; and he went his way into his own land.

Arrival at Sinai.—Exod. xix. 1. In the third month after the children of Israel were gone forth out of the land of Egypt, the same day came they into the wilderness of Sinai. 2. And when they were come to the wilderness of Sinai, they pitched in the wilderness; and there Israel camped before the mount.

27. There are passages in the Bible, however, which support the conclusion that Moses' plea was successful, and that Jethro stayed and accompanied the Israelites on their journey.



PART II
THE MOUNT OF GOD

(A) THE LAW

N EARLY the whole of the Pentateuch from Exod. xx. to the end is concerned with the laws and institutions of the Hebrew State and Church. It will be possible in this volume to give only an outline of what is contained in these books, illustrated by occasional selections from the Bible text. At the same time the reader is reminded that a detailed study of these books, with the assistance provided in the editions of modern theologians, will give a deeper insight not only into the morality and religion, but also into the history, of the Hebrews, than can be gained from the historical portions of the narratives themselves.

After what has been said in the Introduction as to the origin, occasion, and authorship of the documents which form the Pentateuch, it will be unnecessary again to state the grounds upon which scholars have proved the laws of the Pentateuch to consist not of one code, but of several.

The codes thus disengaged are as follows:

1. The Decalogue.—Exod. xx. 1-17.
2. The Book of the Covenant.—Exod. xx. 22—xxiii. ;
cf. Exod. xxxiv. 10-28.
3. The Deuteronomic Law (D).—Deut. iv. 44—xxx.
4. The Law of Holiness (H).—Lev. xvii.—xxvi.

5. The Priests' Code (P).—Gen. xvii. ; Exod. xii. 43-50, xxv.—xxxi., xxxv.—xl. ; Lev. i.—xvi., xxvii. ; Num. i.—x., xv., xviii., xix., xxv. 10—xxxvi.

It will be convenient to say a few words about each of these in turn.

1. *The Decalogue*.—Among all primitive peoples, before any written tabulated laws have come into existence, we find judgments—Torôth, $\theta\acute{\epsilon}\mu\sigma\tau\acute{\epsilon}\varsigma$, dooms—delivered, when occasion demands, by the leader of the tribe. Hence among the Hebrews Moses, as leader, used to give instructions of this sort. Not only did he pronounce judicial decisions in cases of dispute (Exod. xviii. 13, p. 15, *supra*), but later ages credited him, and probably were right in doing so, with pronouncements upon morals and religious ceremonial. Such decisions gradually acquired among the Hebrews, as among other peoples, the force of customary law. But it is a great advance when a people first gains a written code, which is known to all, and acts as the foundation upon which a firm structure of social, moral, and ceremonial law is by degrees erected.¹ It was, therefore, an inestimable advantage to the Hebrews that, at so early a period of their history as the encampment before the Mount, the first simple written code was published among them. This was the Decalogue, a code which, it is to be observed, was neither ceremonial nor social, but purely moral in the character of its contents. It is probable that the original Ten Words which Moses was inspired by God to write down and deliver were simpler and shorter than they are in the actual form in which they have been handed

¹ For the importance of legislative codes in the development of a nation see Maine's *Ancient Law*, pp. 14 seq. (Large Edition).

down to us. The hortatory and explanatory clauses were added in later days. If, for example, the reader compares the text of the Fourth Commandment, as given in Exod. xx., with that given in Deut. v., he will observe differences in the reasons assigned for the keeping of the Sabbath. On this, and other such grounds, it is concluded that the Fourth Commandment in the original moral code ran simply, "Remember the Sabbath day to hallow it." And similarly the other longer commandments were expanded from the one brief sentence of the original.

2. *The Book of the Covenant.*—Besides delivering the simple moral code of the Decalogue, Moses also gave to his people, either at the Mount or in the desert during the wanderings, the outlines of those civil and ceremonial laws which were afterwards expanded, in accordance with the larger requirements and the more developed civilisation of the community, into the Book of the Covenant. Moses was, in fact, the founder of "Israel's nationality, law, and religion." Because he was properly regarded with due veneration in this light by after generations, it was natural that his name should be prefixed to the codes which were subsequently edited. He was, indeed, the original creator of all their Law, and therefore the Hebrews always attributed the authorship of the whole, in its extended form, as well as of the original part, to him. Thus it is that Moses is represented, in all the four later codes, as having delivered them, as they stand, ages before at the Mount. The reader will, then, understand why, in the text of the Bible, Moses himself is described as delivering to a rude nomadic horde manifold laws which could only have developed among, and were only applicable to, the people at later

stages of their history, when they had grown into a settled agricultural and mercantile nation, with opportunities for religious worship and social intercourse which had been impossible in the desert.¹

At the Mount of God, through the human instrumentality of His prophet Moses, Jehovah formally sealed His covenant with the people whom for His purposes He had chosen in Abraham from all the peoples of the earth. He would fulfil His promises to them: they, on their part, were to obey His law. The "Book of the Covenant" and the covenant laws of Exod. xxxiv. contain, though in an enlarged form, the regulations which they then undertook to observe in showing this obedience to their God. Here, first, the *Lex talionis*, or Law of Retaliation, makes its appearance (xxi. 23), and other points of criminal law are prescribed. The religious duties enjoined are simple. The rights of slaves, widows, and the poor, and the claims of justice and humanity in general, are also asserted in this code.

More important, in the history of the Jewish religion, than the institution of the covenant Law itself, is the subsequent ceremony of ratification, when the bond is sealed by the sprinkling of the "blood of the covenant." This will be explained in its place; see below, p. 50.

3. *The Deuteronomic Law.*—The Book of Deuteronomy² dates from the middle of the seventh century—about 645 B.C. It consists of a code of laws expanded from the Book of the Covenant in such a way as to conform to (a) the more complex needs of existing society, (b) the loftier teaching of the prophets as to the nature of God,

¹ See also Appendix, III.

² The name Deuteronomy is derived from LXX version of Deut. xvii. 18, τὸ δευτέρον βιβλιον τοῦτο, and means a "copy," or "repetition of the law," in appropriate contrast to the First Legislation of Exodus.

and their more spiritual conception of His moral requirements. Deuteronomy depends particularly on the preaching of Hosea (*flor. 750-735 B.C.*). The book takes the form of three discourses which Moses is represented as delivering on the steppes of Moab during the last month of the wanderings, and it is partly based, no doubt, on a traditional account of the last words of the great lawgiver, who would himself have naturally supplemented his earlier legislation by enactments more suited to the prospects of a people just about to settle in Canaan. In the first discourse he gives an historical retrospect (i.-iv. 43); in the second and third he expresses the Law, not merely stating it, but explaining its purpose and exhorting the people to obey it (iv. 44-xxx.). The book concludes with Moses' Song and Blessing and some historical matter. The earlier laws are modified and in some details superseded and silently repealed.

The fundamental features of the code are (1) *Monotheism*. "Jehovah is the only God, a pure and spiritual Being who has loved Israel, and is worthy to receive Israel's undivided love in return."¹ (2) *Personal holiness*. Israel is a holy nation, and its individuals must be saintly servants of God: "love is to be the determining principle of their conduct to God and man." (3) *Centralisation of Worship*. There is to be one legitimate place of public worship only, one altar and one temple. Local shrines, at one time necessary, are now to be abolished. (4) *Priesthood*. The Levites alone are "to supply ministers for the sanctuary." At the same time, in the civil and criminal laws changes are made in a marked humanitarian spirit; and of the whole book it has been well said that "nowhere else in

¹ The quotations are from Dr. *Deut.*, p. xxv.

the Old Testament do we breathe such an atmosphere of generous devotion to God." Love, obedience, gratitude, are to rule in the heart of Israel.

4. *The Law of Holiness*.—In the early years of the Captivity, when Ezekiel was the pastor of the exiles (about 595-570 B.C.), it is probable that the short code now called the Law of Holiness was issued (Lev. xvii.-xxvi.). Its leading idea is that Jehovah requires all men, both priests and people, to be holy. Sin is an impurity which defiles the land and the community. A man's duty towards his neighbour is to love him as himself (xix. 18). Real life consists in obedience to God's law (xviii. 5). In detail various laws concerning marriage, purity, agriculture, and the observance of festivals, are re-emphasised. This code is called by the symbol H.

5. *The Priests' Code*.—Later on, in Babylon, after Ezekiel's time, H was incorporated in the elaborate Priestly Code (P). This code was itself combined with much historical matter, a large proportion of which was retained by the ultimate compilers of the Pentateuch. P was composed with the intention of presenting an ideal picture of Israel's sacred institutions, such as they ought to be. This ideal is represented—after the model of the older codes—as having been prescribed by God to Moses, and already realised in the distant past. It is cast in the form of a history extending from the creation (Gen. i.) to the settlement in Canaan.¹ The prominence of the priesthood, of ceremonial, of the Tabernacle and its services (largely coloured by the actual Temple worship of the monarchical period and by Ezekiel's vision of the ideal Temple) is marked throughout. Israel, in fact, is to be a Church, living only for God, in the midst

¹ Montefiore, quoted by Ott., p. 299.

of which God Himself dwells (see Vol. V., Part III., of this series). This is the outcome of Israel's past history and of the ancient laws, of which the Priestly Code is the last expansion before Christ came to "fulfil the Law."¹

(B) INSTITUTIONS AND WORSHIP OF THE HEBREWS

I. THE SABBATH

I. THE SABBATH DAY

The precise origin of the weekly Sabbath has not yet been traced. There are grounds for supposing that it, like other Israelitish institutions (e.g. circumcision) was common to other people besides the Jews. The Babylonians had their "favourable" and "evil" days: the Romans of a later day had their *dies fasti*, *nefasti*, and *fissi*; that is their business days, sacred days, and "split" days of which the morning and evening only were free for business. But, from whatever source the custom had sprung

¹ By some modern critics an exaggerated emphasis is laid upon the influence of the Code of Hammurabi on early Hebrew legislation. Hammurabi, with whom the Amraphel of Gen. xiv. 11 is generally identified, was king of Babylon c. 2250 B.C. He issued a famous code of civil and social enactments, which often bear a close resemblance to the Hebrew statutes, e.g. compare the *Lex talionis* with Hammurabi's "If a man has caused the loss of a gentleman's eye, one shall cause his eye to be lost." But Mr. C. W. Johns and Mr. McNeile show clearly that, as between the Hebrew and the Hammurabian Code, "there can be no question of actual borrowing, at any rate, until post-Exilic times." The differences between the two are no less significant than the resemblances. And the resemblances are satisfactorily accounted for on the following grounds: (1) The laws of primitive peoples (and indeed of highly cultivated peoples) in similar circumstances naturally resemble each other in many points, since they would be drawn up to regulate similar conditions of life. (2) The circumstances under which Hammurabi's code originated were much like the circumstances in which Hebrew legislation, in the form which

of keeping one day in seven distinct, it is clear that Moses bestowed a special religious character upon this day: it thus became a Divine institution. By his own and by subsequent legislation this day was to be a day of rest (*shâbhath* = to desist), a day of kindness to the servant and the beast of burden. But, besides being a holiday, it was to be marked with distinctive religious observances; it was to serve a moral and religious purpose; it was to be a token to the people of their peculiar selection from all the peoples of the world. To profane it was to incur the penalty of death. Yet it appears from the language of the prophets that in practice the day was not as strictly observed as the law demanded until after the Captivity. Nehemiah insisted upon the proper sanctity of the day. But from this date developed that excessive formalism in its observance which met with our Lord's stern disapproval in time to come. (*Murray's I.B.D.*, art. "Sabbath"; McN. *Ex.* and Dr. *Gen. passim.*)

its civil and social sections bear in the Bible, originated. Hammurabi's code represents a compromise between the customs of a civilised, conquered people and those of a virile, conquering race; Hebrew legislation represents a similar compromise, between the customs of the civilised, conquered Canaanites and those of the ruder, conquering Hebrews. (3) The Babylonian population by that time was Semitic, and both Hammurabi's Code and the Hebrew Codes display features which may have been common to *all* Semitic peoples in pre-historic times. (4) There are historical indications (*e.g.* evidence that written communications passed in the Babylonian dialect between Babylon and the western countries) that before the Hebrew invasion of Canaan the Canaanites were themselves subject to Babylonian influence. Naturally, therefore, these Babylonian and Canaanitish ideas combined had some influence upon the incoming Hebrews, which was illustrated in the social enactments of the Hebrews originating after their settlement in Canaan. See further the note on the Tel-el-Amarna letters, p. 103.

Perhaps the book of the Bible which best shows what a real living force the Law was to the pious Jew—how it was as sure a guide for human conduct as the precepts of Christ are to the Christian—is the book of Psalms, especially Ps. cxix.

2. THE SABBATICAL YEAR

(a) *From the Book of the Covenant*

Exodus xxiii, 10, 11

The poor and the beasts are to enjoy the fruits of the land.—
 10. And six years thou shalt sow thy land, and shalt gather in the fruits thereof: 11. but the seventh year thou shalt let it rest and lie still; that the poor of thy people may eat: and what they leave the beasts of the field shall eat. In like manner thou shalt deal with thy vineyard, and with thy oliveyard.

(b) *From Deuteronomy*

Deuteronomy xv. 1-5

Debtors are to be released.—1. At the end of every seven years thou shalt make a release. 2. And this is the manner of the release: Every creditor that lendeth ought unto his neighbour shall release it; he shall not exact it of his neighbour, or of his brother; because it is called the LORD's release. 3. Of a foreigner thou mayest exact it again: but that which is thine with thy brother thine hand shall release; 4. *howbeit* there shall be no poor among you (for the LORD shall greatly bless thee in the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee for an inheritance to possess it;) 5. *if only* thou carefully hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to observe to do all these commandments which I command thee this day.

(c) *From the Law of Holiness*

Leviticus xxv. 2-5

The land shall enjoy a Sabbath rest.—2. When ye come into the land which I give you, then shall the land keep a

sabbath unto the LORD. 3. Six years thou shalt sow thy field, and six years thou shalt prune thy vineyard, and gather in the fruit thereof: 4. but in the seventh year shall be a sabbath of rest unto the land, a sabbath for the LORD: thou shalt neither sow thy field, nor prune thy vineyard. 5. That which groweth of its own accord of thy harvest thou shalt not reap, neither gather the grapes of thy vine undressed: for it is a year of rest unto the land.

NOTE—The three laws here given present different applications of the same institution. As each seventh day, so also each seventh year is to be one of rest, by which the poor and downtrodden especially are to benefit. This custom of leaving the fields and gardens untilled, and of granting the natural product of them to the poor, is paralleled in other countries. It is a relic of communistic agriculture, and asserts the claims of the poor villager to the produce of the land as against the individual landowner who takes the tithe, or tenth part, in the other years. Furthermore, the plough-land itself would benefit by being periodically left fallow. Probably the passage in Deuteronomy is to be interpreted as a provision not for the cancelling of certain debts altogether, like the revolutionary *Seisachtheia* (Removal of Burdens) of Solon, but for the suspension during that year of the creditor's right to repayment. Thus the creditor's position with regard to debts is strictly analogous to that of the landowner with regard to the land. It must be remembered that no interest was allowed to be exacted by law, but security in the shape of the debtor's land and person was taken; and indeed from Neh. v. it would appear that usury was in fact practised in defiance of the law.

The relief granted by this law to the debtor would be particularly welcome in the Sabbath year, when business would necessarily be slack and the ordinary means of obtaining a livelihood from agriculture suspended. The system obviously is inapplicable to the nomad Israelites at Sinai, and only came into force after the settlement in Canaan. Though there are indications (*e.g.* 2 Chron. xxxvi. 21, and Neh. v. and x.) that these rules were in practice often relaxed, yet the custom was maintained up to and after the fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. It is referred to by Tacitus, (*Hist.* v. 4),¹ and it is said that the land-rest system is still maintained by the Jews in Palestine at this day.

3. THE YEAR OF JUBILEE

Like in character to the Sabbatical year, we find in H and P that each fiftieth year—*i.e.* the year following seven complete septennates, or periods of seven years each—is a year of jubilee. The name is derived from *yôbhel*, the ram's-horn trumpet, which was sounded in proclamation of the year. In this year all alienated land property reverts to its original owner. All slaves of Hebrew race are emancipated. The principle of the theocracy is thereby asserted—“the land is Mine,” and the duties of humanitarianism are enforced² (Lev. xxv., xxvii.).

¹ Dein blandiente inertia septimum quoque annum ignaviæ datum: “Their indolence soon lured them into devoting the seventh year, too, to holiday.”

² Slaves of Hebrew race were also allowed to go free after six years' service, if they desired. This release, though it is an application of the Sabbatical principle, is not one of the provisions of the Sabbatical year, as is sometimes supposed: there is no evidence that slaves were freed in that year (Exod. xxi. 2, etc.).

II. THE GREAT FESTIVALS

Originally the three national festivals of the year, the Passover, the Feast of Pentecost, and the Feast of Tabernacles, were connected with the different stages of the harvest; but, by associating them with incidents of the Exodus and the wanderings, the Hebrews added an historical significance to them as well. Processions would in early times be made to the local sanctuaries on these occasions, and in later times to the central shrine.

Exodus xxiii. 14-17

The Feast of Mazzôth, with which is associated the Passover.

—14. Three times thou shalt keep a feast unto me in the year. 15. Thou shalt keep the feast of unleavened bread: (thou shalt eat unleavened bread seven days, as I commanded thee, in the time appointed of the month Abib: for in it thou camest out from Egypt: and none shall appear before me empty :)

The Feast of Harvest, or Pentecost, or Weeks.—16. and the feast of harvest, the firstfruits of thy labours, which thou hast sown in the field :

15. In origin the Feast of Unleavened Cakes was distinct from the Passover; but in this passage, as elsewhere, the two are closely combined, and in the New Testament they are practically identified. The Passover falls on Nisan, or Abib (April) 14th, and *Mazzôth* begins on the 15th. *Mazzôth* is a thanksgiving for the beginning of harvest; the Passover commemorates the redemption from Egypt. (See Vol. I. of this series, p. 173.)

16a. This feast took place fifty days after *Mazzôth*, and marked the completion of corn-harvest. In later days the giving of the Law at Sinai was commemorated in connection with this feast, this event being supposed to have occurred fifty days after the Exodus.

The Feast of Ingathering, or Tabernacles, or Booths.—and the feast of ingathering, which is in the end of the year, when thou hast gathered in thy labours out of the field.

17. Three times in the year all thy males shall appear before the Lord GOD.

III. THE DAY OF ATONEMENT: A SOLEMN FAST

This important and significant ceremony was ordained for October 10th (Tishri), preceding by a few days the Feast of Tabernacles. How far this ritual is of Mosaic origin, and to what extent it was observed by the Jews in pre-Exilic times, are debated points. There is no unquestioned historical allusion to it in the Old Testament outside the Pentateuch. But its prominence by the time of our Lord is abundantly proved, and the most eloquent commentary upon it is to be found in the ninth and tenth chapters of the Epistle to the Hebrews (*q.v.*). This pre-Christian sacrament holds an important place among the institutions of the Old Testament period because of its relation to the atoning sacrifice of Christ.

16 b. On the completion of the ingathering of all the year's produce—corn, wine, oil, etc.—in October (Tishri 15th), this, the most joyful of all the festivals, was held. The associated custom of living in booths during the week of the festival recalled the wanderings in the wilderness. (Ott., pp. 303-4.)

“With regard to the dates of the three festivals, it must be remembered that the three stages in the harvest could not fall simultaneously in all parts of the country. In Palestine, by reason of its physical features, were to be found widely different climates and temperatures; and crops and fruits would ripen correspondingly at very different times.” Originally, therefore, each district observed its three festivals independently. But by the time of H and P the local celebrations had been stopped and the dates given above had been fixed for the whole nation (Mc.N. *Ex.* 141; and *Lev.* xxiii.).

It must be borne in mind always that the cardinal idea of sacrifice is this: that the offerer, whether individual only or representative of the whole people, is regarded as dying vicariously in the person of the victim; and it is in the victim's blood, here shed in sacrifice, that the essential principle of life is held to reside. (*Cf.* Lev. xvii. 11; and see *Murray's I.B.D.*, art. "Atonement, Day of"; and below, p. 51.)

Leviticus xvi. 2-34

The priest, having selected his victims, first makes atonement for himself with a bullock, a sin-offering.—2. And the LORD said unto Moses, Speak unto Aaron thy brother, that he come not at all times into the holy place within the vail before the mercy seat, which is upon the ark; that he die not: for I will appear in the cloud upon the mercy seat. 3. Thus shall Aaron come into the holy place: with a young bullock for a sin offering, and a ram for a burnt offering. 4. He shall put on the holy linen coat, and he shall have the linen breeches upon his flesh, and shall be girded with a linen girdle, and with the linen mitre shall he be attired: these are holy garments; therefore shall he wash his flesh in water, and so put them on. 5. And he shall take of the congregation of the children of Israel two kids of the goats for a sin offering, and one ram for a burnt offering. 6. And Aaron shall offer his bullock of the sin offering, which is for

2. die not. There seems to be here a survival of a primitive notion that it was dangerous to enter into the presence of the Deity without taking proper precautions. The phrase is repeated below, Exod. xxviii. 35, p. 47.

mercy seat. This and the other parts of the Tabernacle are fully explained later, pp. 38 *seq.*

himself, and make an atonement for himself, and for his house. 7. And he shall take the two goats, and present them before the LORD at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. 8. And Aaron shall cast lots upon the two goats ; one lot for the LORD, and the other lot for the scapegoat. 9. And Aaron shall bring the goat upon which the LORD's lot fell, and offer him for a sin offering. 10. But the goat, on which the lot fell to be the scapegoat, shall be presented alive before the LORD, to make an atonement with him, and to let him go for a scapegoat into the wilderness. 11. And Aaron shall bring the bullock of the sin offering, which is for himself, and shall make an atonement for himself, and for his house, and shall kill the bullock of the sin offering which is for himself : 12. and he shall take a censer full of burning coals of fire from off the altar before the LORD, and his hands full of sweet incense beaten small, and bring it within the vail : 13. and he shall put the incense upon the fire before the LORD, that the cloud of the incense may cover the mercy seat that is upon the testimony, that he die not : 14. and he shall take of the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle it with his finger upon the mercy seat eastward ; and before the mercy seat shall he sprinkle of the blood with his finger seven times.

8. for the scapegoat. Heb. and R.V. "For Azazel." The symbolic meaning of the ceremony is in any case clear. Azazel is interpreted :

(1) As in A.V., scapegoat; *cf.* LXX.

(2) But the parallelism "For Jehovah" and "For Azazel" points to a proper name.

Azazel may = the Devil, or the Azazel of the Book of Enoch, who is the leader of the bad angels. (The Book of Enoch is an invaluable work of about 100 B.C. which had a great influence on early Christian writers and seems to have been excluded from the Hebrew Canon almost by accident.)

And next for the people with one of the goats, a sin offering.
15. Then shall he kill the goat of the sin offering, that is, for the people, and bring his blood within the vail, and do with that blood as he did with the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle it upon the mercy seat, and before the mercy seat: 16. and he shall make an atonement for the holy place, because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel, and because of their transgressions in all their sins: and so shall he do for the tabernacle of the congregation, that remaineth among them in the midst of their uncleanness. 17. And there shall be no man in the tabernacle of the congregation when he goeth in to make an atonement in the holy place, until he come out, and have made an atonement for himself, and for his household, and for all the congregation of Israel. 18. And he shall go out unto the altar that is before the LORD, and make an atonement for it; and shall take of the blood of the bullock, and of the blood of the goat, and put it upon the horns of the altar round about. 19. And he shall sprinkle of the blood upon it with his finger seven times, and cleanse it, and hallow it from the uncleanness of the children of Israel.

Then puts away the people's sins upon the scapegoat which is sent into the wilderness, a sin offering.—20. And when he hath made an end of reconciling the holy place, and the tabernacle of the congregation, and the altar, he shall bring the live goat: 21. and Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat, and shall send him away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness: 22. and the goat

shall bear upon him all their iniquities unto a land not inhabited: and he shall let go the goat in the wilderness.

Afterwards he must ceremonially cleanse himself, and offer the two rams as a burnt offering.—23. And Aaron shall come into the tabernacle of the congregation, and shall put off the linen garments, which he put on when he went into the holy place, and shall leave them there: 24. and he shall wash his flesh with water in the holy place, and put on his garments, and come forth, and offer his burnt offering, and the burnt offering of the people, and make an atonement for himself, and for the people. 25. And the fat of the sin offering shall he burn upon the altar. 26. And he that let go the goat for the scapegoat shall wash his clothes, and bathe his flesh in water, and afterward come into the camp. 27. And the bullock for the sin offering, and the goat for the sin offering, whose blood was brought in to make atonement in the holy place, shall one carry forth without the camp; and they shall burn in the fire their skins, and their flesh. 28. And he that burneth them shall wash his clothes, and bathe his flesh in water, and afterward he shall come into the camp.

This is to be the permanent ritual.—29. And this shall be a statute for ever unto you: that in the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month, ye shall afflict your souls, and do no work at all, whether it be one of your own country, or a stranger that sojourneth among you: 30. for on that day shall the priest make an atonement for you, to cleanse you, that ye may be clean from all your sins before the LORD. 31. It shall be a sabbath of rest unto you, and ye shall afflict your souls, by a statute for ever. 32. And the priest, *who shall be anointed and*

who shall be consecrated to minister in the priest's office in his father's stead, shall make the atonement, and shall put on the linen clothes, even the holy garments: 33. and he shall make an atonement for the holy sanctuary, and he shall make an atonement for the tabernacle of the congregation, and for the altar, and he shall make an atonement for the priests, and for all the people of the congregation. 34. And this shall be an everlasting statute unto you, to make an atonement for the children of Israel for all their sins once a year. And he did as the **LORD** commanded Moses.

IV. THE TABERNACLE AND ITS FURNITURE

A large portion of Exodus—chaps. xxv. *seq.*—is devoted to a detailed description by the Priestly writer of the Tabernacle and its ministry, the pattern whereof had been “shown to Moses in the Mount.” This volume affords space only for the briefest summary of these chapters: the reader who has opportunity will find the full treatment of these subjects in the introduction and notes of McN. *Ex.* highly interesting.

The Tabernacle (*Ex. xxvi.*) was formed after the manner of an elaborate tent. The inner covering was of fine coloured linen adorned with cherubim; the outer covering was of goat's hair. This tent-roof was supported on frames (*Kerâshim*, not “boards,” as A.V.) of acacia wood, set in solid silver blocks which stood on the ground. The tent thus formed was 45 feet long, 15 high, and 15 wide. How the frame-work sides would stand upright with this enormous hanging to support is not clear: perhaps the arms, or tenons, of verse 17 mean slanting stays or props; these

may have been set on the inner side of the frames and slanting against them from a point on the ground a few feet away, so as to resist the inward thrust. From inside the elaborate tapestry was visible both overhead and in the interstices of the frame-work sides. Gold, silver, and all manner of costly decoration were lavished upon the interior of the building.

A space of 15 feet at the west end was separated from the rest by a veil hung from the curtain-roof. This was the Most Holy Place; the larger part, or nave, was the Holy Place. Access was afforded into the Tabernacle from the east end only.

In the Holy Place were set (*a*) the Lamp-stand, on the left or south side, by which alone the tent was lighted; the form of its seven branching candlesticks is familiar from the representation on the Arch of Titus at Rome: (*b*) the Table for the Presence-bread, or Shewbread, on the right: (*c*) the golden Altar of Incense close to the veil.

The Ark.—In the Most Holy Place stood the Ark (called Ark of God, Ark of Jehovah, Ark of the Testimony, Ark of the Covenant). Within it were placed the Tablets of the Law,¹ and on it was laid a slab of gold called the Propitiatory, or Mercy Seat, upon which stood two cherubim, *i.e.* creatures with outstretched wings, symbolising the strength and swiftness of the Divine Power. Their mystic bodily shape is described in Ezek. i. 5 *seq.*

Outside the Tabernacle stood (*a*) the Laver, or bowl for the ceremonial cleansing of the priests; (*b*) the great Altar of bronze, for sacrifices.

¹ Heb. ix. 4 follows a later Jewish departure from strict Old Testament tradition and states that Aaron's rod and the pot of manna were also deposited *in* the Ark. Our text (Exod. xvi. 33, etc.) says that these memorials were set in *front of* the Ark.

Surrounding the Tent itself was an enclosure formed by fine linen curtains hung on a screen of brazen pillars $7\frac{1}{2}$ feet high. The measurements of this court were 150 feet by 75 feet.

Historicity.—It is evident that in the elaborate detail which the Priestly writer has given of the Tabernacle and its equipment in the distant past, he has drawn from his imagination an ideal picture of the Tabernacle, coloured largely by reminiscences of Solomon's Temple and Ezekiel's visionary Temple. In Moses' time neither the skill nor the materials, nor the means of transport required for a structure of such proportions could have been available among the nomad Israelites. Though the Ark has a history from early times, the Tabernacle is not mentioned in connection with it in our records, except in one or two doubtful contexts (for details see McN.). On the other hand, our records bear clear witness to a simple Tent of Meeting (below, p. 59), *i.e.* an ordinary nomad's tent, which Moses used to take and pitch outside the camp : and the Ark, Table, Lamp-stand and Altar were unquestionably part of the religious furniture of these earliest times. This was all idealised into the gorgeous magnificence depicted in the Priestly Text.

At the same time the student will be careful not to under-estimate the value of the account presented in these narratives of the religious belief, practice, and aspirations of the Israelites both in Moses' time and in the day when the Priestly document was compiled. These are the points that really matter. And they are exhibited in a stronger, not a weaker, light, when the records have been analysed according to the principles of reverent historical criticism.

The place of the Tabernacle in the development of religious ideas.—To the Israel of the Mosaic age, Jehovah was their national God, but not the only god. Other gods existed for other tribes ; Jehovah was superior to them in power and in goodness. He would give His people victory in battle : hence the Ark, the visible emblem of His presence, was taken into the field. He would have them be good as He is : hence the Mosaic moral law. He could dwell among them : hence the Tent of Meeting. He could be propitiated and pleased : hence the Altars of Sacrifice.

But to the Israel of the Priestly age Jehovah was far more than this. He is the only God, universal, omnipotent. Images and local altars are out of place. He is One, and His worship must be centralised in one sanctuary only. At this one sanctuary no elaboration of worship is too costly in His honour. And “underlying this centralisation of worship there was a deep innate longing which could find its full satisfaction only in the Incarnation—a desire for a *concrete objective presence* of God among men.” Until this aspiration is realised man must be content with seeking His *spiritual presence* : and this would be vouchsafed in special measure in the Most Holy Place, hedged about with the utmost sanctity, entered only by the high priest, and approached only through the Holy Place, which was itself attended by the ministrations of a highly-organised priesthood. Here appears the glory of Jehovah !¹

It is these later ideas—with the ceremonial which they entailed—that are in part reflected into the earlier and

Hence came the exaggerated and false notion that God’s presence is confined to the Temple at Jerusalem, a notion against which protests are loudly raised by the prophets themselves, and an indictment of which is pronounced by St. Stephen in his Defence, Acts vii.

simpler age, in the narratives of the Tabernacle and its ministry. It will not escape notice that in their descriptions the writers of the Pentateuch often foreshadow many important conceptions of Christianity. The Laver foreshadows the "washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost" (Tit. iii. 5). The Presence-Bread foreshadows the Eucharist. The Ark and the Altar of Incense are outward symbols of two profound conceptions—the manifestation of God to man and the spiritual worship of God by man. Sacrifice at the bronze Altar is a preparation for the sacrifice of Christ for sin, for "apart from shedding of blood there is no remission" (Heb. ix. 22). The doctrine of God's abiding in the Tabernacle "contains in germ all the manifold teaching which finds its highest expression in the writings of St. John. As the Father abides in the Son, and He in the Father, so the Son abides in men and they in Him" (McN. *Ex. lxxxvii. seq.*).

V. THE PRIESTS

The elaborate priestly system described by P was naturally a gradual growth, not completed until after the Exile. In the early nomadic days, and for generations afterwards, the chief function of the priest was to deliver *Torôth*, that is, statements of the divine will, to all inquirers. The act of sacrifice was not *then* the exclusive prerogative of the priest. Sacrifice was offered by, *e.g.*, Gideon, Jephthah, Manoah, Saul, and David. In the time of the Judges the ordinary clergyman, or priest, was the Levite (Judg. xvii.). But when the whole hierarchy (*i.e.* the body of men in Holy Orders) had been recast to meet the requirements of the lofty sanctuary worship

sketched in the last section, the constitution of the priesthood was as follows :

1. Aaron and his hereditary successors were the high priests. (The title "high priest" is not used until the return from Exile.)

2. The other members of the Aaronic family were the priests.

3. The Levitical tribe were entrusted with the care of the sanctuary and the minor duties of ministration. Hence, when this system had been worked into the historical narrative of the Mosaic and subsequent times by the later historian, we find in our texts that the functions of the priests are :

(a) To offer sacrifice.

(b) To communicate the *Torôth* to the people.

(c) To summon religious assemblies.

(d) To give the signal for the march or for battle with the trumpet.

(e) To bless the people in Jehovah's name.

(f) In general to be divinely ordained instruments through whom God made Himself known to Israel as their Lawgiver, Judge, and King.¹

For a detailed examination of the development of the Aaronic priesthood and of the whole of this complicated question see McN. *Ex. lxiv. seq.*

VI. THE HIGH PRIEST'S ROBES

Exodus xxviii. 1-39

1. And take thou unto thee Aaron thy brother, and his sons with him, from among the children of Israel, that

¹ Ott., p. 71.

he may minister unto me in the priest's office, even Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar, Aaron's sons. 2. And thou shalt make holy garments for Aaron thy brother for glory and for beauty. 3. And thou shalt speak unto all that are wise hearted, whom I have filled with the spirit of wisdom, that they may make Aaron's garments to *sanctify* him, that he may minister unto me in the priest's office. 4. And these are the garments which they shall make; a breastplate, and an ephod, and a robe, and a broidered coat, a mitre, and a girdle: and they shall make holy garments for Aaron thy brother, and his sons, that he may minister unto me in the priest's office. 5. And they shall take gold, and blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine linen.

The Ephod.—6. And they shall make the ephod of gold, of blue, and of purple, of scarlet, and fine twined linen, with cunning work. 7. It shall have the two shoulderpieces thereof joined at the two edges thereof; and so it shall be joined together. 8. And the curious girdle of the ephod, which is upon it, shall be *like the*

4. *mitre, i.e.* turban.

5. The parts of Aaron's robes here specified are:

(1) The coat, or tunic, reaching to the feet.

(2) The violet robe, put on over the coat, but not reaching down so low.

(3) The Ephod, put on over the violet robe, but not reaching so low.

(4) The sash, put on over the Ephod, round the waist.

(5) The Breastplate, hung by chains from the shoulders; put on over the Ephod. It contained the Urim and Tummim.

(6) The turban on his head.

(7) The diadem, or tiara, above the turban.

See a sketch in *Murray's I.B.D.*, p. 349.

6. *ephod.* This garment was sewn down the front and put on over the head like a chasuble. The term Ephod is also applied to a large golden figure weighing 1,700 shekels made by Gideon, Judg. viii. (see below, p. 159).

8. *curious girdle* = artistic encasing-band.

work thereof and of the same piece; even of gold, of blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen. 9. And thou shalt take two onyx stones, and grave on them the names of the children of Israel: 10. six of their names on one stone, and the other six names of the rest on the other stone, according to their birth. 11. With the work of an engraver in stone, like the engravings of a signet, shalt thou engrave the two stones with the names of the children of Israel: thou shalt make them to be set in ouches of gold. 12. And thou shalt put the two stones upon the shoulders of the ephod for stones of memorial unto the children of Israel: and Aaron shall bear their names before the LORD upon his two shoulders for a memorial.

The Breastplate of Judgment.—15. And thou shalt make the breastplate of judgment with cunning work; *like* the work of the ephod thou shalt make it; of gold, of blue, and of purple, and of scarlet, and of fine twined linen, shalt thou make it. 16. Foursquare it shall be being doubled; a span shall be the length thereof, and a span shall be the breadth thereof. 17. And thou shalt set in it settings of stones, even four rows of stones: the first row shall be a sardius, a topaz, and a carbuncle: this shall be the first row. 18. And the second row shall be an emerald, a sapphire, and a diamond. 19. And the third row a ligure, an agate, and an amethyst. 20. And the fourth row a

11. *ouches* = filigree settings. “‘Ouch,’ like ‘apron’ and ‘adder’ and other words, has lost an initial *n*” (Mc.N.).

12. *memorial*, *i.e.* to remind Jehovah of His people.

15. *the breastplate* is a square pouch, or bag, nine inches square, containing the Urim and Tummim. See verse 30 below.

17. It is not at all certain what precious stones are really meant by the Hebrew words in this passage. *Ligure* probably = jacinth, a hard, amber-coloured stone.

beryl, and an onyx, and a jasper : they shall be set in gold in their inclosings. 21. And the stones shall be with the names of the children of Israel, twelve, according to their names, like the engravings of a signet ; every one with his name shall they be according to the twelve tribes. 22. And thou shalt make upon the breastplate chains at the ends of wreathen work of pure gold. 23. And thou shalt make upon the breastplate two rings of gold, and shalt put the two rings on the two ends of the breastplate. 24. And thou shalt put the two wreathen chains of gold in the two rings which are on the ends of the breastplate. 25. And the other two ends of the two wreathen chains thou shalt fasten in the two ouches, and put them on the shoulderpieces of the ephod before it. 29. And Aaron shall bear the names of the children of Israel in the breastplate of judgment upon his heart, when he goeth in unto the holy place, for a memorial before the LORD continually.

The Urim and Tummim.—30. And thou shalt put in the breastplate of judgment the Urim and the Thummim ; and they shall be upon Aaron's heart, when he goeth in before the LORD : and Aaron shall bear the judgment of the children of Israel upon his heart before the LORD continually.

The violet robe.—31. And thou shalt make the robe of

30. the **Urim and Tummim** (not 'Thummim') were probably two objects, stones most likely, which were cast as lots for the purpose of obtaining a divine decision. They are referred to some eight times in the Old Testament. (i) The old derivation, "Light and Perfection," does not suit all the contexts, and is probably wrong ; (ii) perhaps the words are derived from roots meaning respectively "to curse" and "to be without fault," the one signifying that a proposed action provoked God's wrath, the other that it was satisfactory to God ; (iii) or perhaps both words are derived from roots meaning "to give an oracle."

the ephod all of blue. 32. And there shall be an hole in the top of it, in the midst thereof: it shall have a binding of woven work round about the hole of it, as it were the hole of an habergeon, that it be not rent. 33. And beneath upon the hem of it thou shalt make pomegranates of blue, and of purple, and of scarlet, round about the hem thereof: and bells of gold between them round about: 34. a golden bell and a pomegranate, a golden bell and a pomegranate, upon the hem of the robe round about. 35. And it shall be upon Aaron to minister: and his sound shall be heard when he goeth in unto the holy place before the LORD, and when he cometh out, that he die not.

The gold diadem.—36. And thou shalt make a plate of pure gold, and grave upon it, like the engravings of a signet, HOLINESS TO THE LORD. 37. And thou shalt put it on a blue lace, that it may be upon the mitre; upon the forefront of the mitre it shall be. 38. And it shall be upon Aaron's forehead, that Aaron may bear the iniquity of the holy things, which the children of Israel shall hallow in all their holy gifts; and it shall be always upon his forehead, that they may be accepted before the LORD.

The coat and sash.—39. And thou shalt embroider the coat of fine linen, and thou shalt make the mitre of fine linen, and thou shalt make the girdle of needlework.

31. blue, *i.e.* violet, the sign of royalty and ecclesiastical dignity.

32. habergeon = a coat of mail or leather.

35. die not. See above, p. 34.

36. plate, *i.e.* diadem, worn above the turban.

38. bear the iniquity of the holy things. "Since Aaron is marked out by the diadem as the 'holy one to Jehovah,' summing up all the holy things in his person, he is also ideally responsible for guarding all holy things from profanation. Therefore on him comes the guilt and its punishment if any of them are profaned" (McN. *ad loc.*).

39. the coat is the ordinary tunic.

(C) EVENTS CONNECTED WITH THE
GIVING OF THE LAW

I. THE THEOPHANY, OR VISION OF GOD, AT SINAI

Exodus xix. and xx. 18-21

God speaks with Moses in the Mount.—xix. 3. And Moses went up unto God, and the LORD called unto him out of the mountain, saying, Thus shalt thou say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel; 4. Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself. 5. Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: 6. and ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation.

God warns Moses that the people should prepare for His voice.—9. And the LORD said unto Moses, Lo, I come unto thee in a thick cloud, that the people may hear when I speak with thee, and believe thee for ever. 10. And the LORD said unto Moses, Go unto the people, and sanctify them to day and to morrow, and let them wash their clothes, 11. and be ready against the third day: for the third day the LORD will come down in the sight of all the people upon mount Sinai. 12. And thou shalt set bounds unto the people round about, saying, Take heed to yourselves, that ye go not up into the mount, or touch the border of it: whosoever toucheth the mount shall be surely put to death: 13. there shall not an hand touch it,

9. The text of this chapter has suffered so much dislocation from the hands of the successive Hebrew redactors that as it stands it is unintelligible. The editors have done their best to reduce it to a consistent picture.

but he shall surely be stoned, or shot through ; whether it be beast or man, it shall not live. 24. Away, get thee down : and thou shalt come up, thou and Aaron with thee : but let not the priests and the people break through to come up unto the LORD, lest he break forth upon them.

Moses descends and warns the people.—14. And Moses went down from the mount unto the people, and sanctified the people ; and they washed their clothes. 15. And he said unto the people, Be ready against the third day.

The people are afraid.—16. And it came to pass on the third day in the morning, that there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud : so that all the people that was in the camp trembled. 17. And Moses brought forth the people out of the camp to meet with God ; and they stood at the nether part of the mount. 18. And mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the LORD descended upon it in fire : and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly. xx. 18. And all the people saw the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking : and when the people saw it, they removed, and stood afar off. 19. And they said unto Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will hear : but let not God speak with us, lest we die.

Moses reassures them, and again ascends the Mount.—20. And Moses said unto the people, Fear not : for God is come to prove you, and that his fear may be before your faces, that ye sin not. 21. And the people stood afar off, and Moses drew near unto the thick darkness where God was. xix. 19. And when the voice of the trumpet sounded long, and waxed louder and louder, Moses spake, and God

answered him by a voice. 20. And the LORD came down upon mount Sinai, on the top of the mount: and the LORD called Moses up to the top of the mount: and Moses went up.

2. THE RATIFICATION OF THE COVENANT

While Moses talked with God in the mountain he is represented as having received from Jehovah the divine injunctions contained in the Decalogue and the Book of the Covenant referred to above, p. 22. He now descended and the people swore to keep their part of the covenant. This is one of the most significant passages in the whole of the Old Testament. The sealing of the covenant, not the giving of the Law, is the central point in the history of the Israelites' journey to Canaan.

Exodus xxiv. 3-8

3. And Moses came and told the people all the words of the LORD, and all the judgments: and all the people answered with one voice, and said, All the words which the LORD hath said will we do. 4. And Moses wrote all the words of the LORD, and rose up early in the morning, and builded an altar under the hill, and twelve pillars, according to the twelve tribes of Israel. 5. And he sent young men of the children of Israel, which offered burnt offerings, and sacrificed peace offerings of oxen unto the LORD. 6. And Moses took half of the blood, and put it in basons; and half of the blood he sprinkled on the altar. 7. And he took the book of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people: and they said, All that the LORD hath said will we do, and be obedient. 8. And Moses took the blood,

and sprinkled it on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the covenant, which the LORD hath made with you concerning all these words.

3. THE TABLES OF STONE

Exodus xxiv. 12-18

Moses ascends into the Mount for the third time and stays forty days there.—12. And the LORD said unto Moses, Come up to me into the mount, and be there: and I will give

8. **blood of the covenant**, *i.e.* which seals and ratifies the covenant. “concerning all these words,” should be translated “upon all these conditions.”

With regard to the word covenant, it is important to grasp the following points :

(1) A covenant means the imposition of obligations upon two contracting parties. In this case the contractors are Jehovah and Israel. In xix. 5, 6 (above, p. 48) God had entered, on His side, into an obligation, subject to the condition of Israel keeping *their* part of the covenant, to make His people (i) “a *peculiar* treasure unto Me” (*cf.* “the child of God”: English Church Catechism); (ii) “a kingdom of priests and an holy nation” (*cf.* “inheritors of the kingdom of heaven”). In xxiv. 7 Israel gives the response on its side: “All that the LORD hath said will we do, and be obedient.”

(2) Then follows the sealing of the covenant, *with sacrifice*. And in a sacrifice, covenant sacrifice or other, the offerer, who in this case is the person entering into the covenant, is regarded as dying vicariously in the victim. So in the Christian covenant, the more spiritual character of which is foreshadowed by Jeremiah xxxi. 31-4, the Christian is to be regarded as dying, a death unto sin, in the person of the victim, Christ, the Representative of all mankind. It is abundantly clear that our Lord had this Exodus scene in His mind, and deliberately gave a new significance to the old Jewish sacrificial covenant, when He said, “This is my blood of the *new* covenant” (Mk. xiv. 24). The translation of *διαθήκη* by “Testament” in the Bible and the Prayer Book is unfortunate, since it obliterates the real meaning of our Lord’s words and intentions. Again, in the Epistle to the Hebrews, chap. ix., the translations “testament” and “testator” obscure allusions the meaning of which is clear when taken in connection with our Lord’s words and the Exodus covenant sacrifice on which they are based. This chapter, Heb. ix., is a lucid exposition of the sacrificial aspect of the new covenant between God and man, made in the person of the victim, Christ, and affords an instructive commentary on the passage before us. If in Heb. ix. 15-20 “testament” is replaced by

thee tables of stone, and a law, and commandments which I have written : that thou mayest teach them. 13. And Moses rose up, and his minister Joshua : and Moses went up into the mount of God. 14. And he said unto the elders, Tarry ye here for us, until we come again unto you : and, behold, Aaron and Hur are with you : if any man have any matters to do, let him come unto them. 15. And Moses went up into the mount, and a cloud covered the mount. 16. And the glory of the LORD abode upon mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it six days : and the seventh day he called unto Moses out of the midst of the cloud. 17. And the sight of the glory of the LORD was like devouring fire on the top of the mount in the eyes of the children of Israel. 18. And Moses went into the midst of the cloud, and gat him up into the mount : and Moses was in the mount forty days and forty nights.

4. THE GOLDEN BULL Exodus xxxii

1. And when the people saw that Moses delayed to come down out of the mount, the people gathered themselves together unto Aaron, and said unto him, Up, make us gods, which shall go before us ; for as for this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him. 2. And Aaron said unto

its correct rendering " covenant," and " testator " by " covenanter," the meaning is clear ; and in verse 17 *ἐπὶ τοῖς νεκροῖς* obviously means " over dead victims," not " after men are dead," though the writer is probably here purposely playing upon the two meanings of *διαθήκη* — " covenant " and " will." Similarly our terms " Old and New Testament " are deplorable perversions of " Old and New Covenant." (The editors are indebted to the Rev. S. M. Reynolds, of Durham, for valuable suggestions upon this subject. See also vol. i. of this series, p. xii.)

12. The tables are inscribed with the Decalogue.

18. During this time it was believed that the pattern of the Tabernacle, etc., was shown to Moses by Jehovah.

them, Break off the golden earrings, which are in the ears of your wives, of your sons, and of your daughters, and bring them unto me. 3. And all the people brake off the golden earrings which were in their ears, and brought them unto Aaron. 4. And he received them at their hand, and fashioned it with a graving tool, after he had made it a molten calf: and they said, These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt. 5. And when Aaron saw it, he built an altar before it; and Aaron made proclamation, and said, To morrow is a feast to the LORD. 6. And they rose up early on the morrow, and offered burnt offerings, and brought peace offerings; and the people sat down to eat and to drink, and rose up to play.

Anger of God, and Moses' intercession.—7. And the LORD said unto Moses, Go, get thee down; for thy people, which thou broughtest out of the land of Egypt, have corrupted themselves: 8. they have turned aside quickly out of the way which I commanded them: they have made them a molten calf, and have worshipped it, and have sacrificed thereunto, and said, These be thy gods, O Israel, which have brought thee up out of the land of Egypt. 9. And the LORD said unto Moses, I have seen this people, and, behold, it is a stiffnecked people: 10. now therefore let me alone, that my wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them: and I will make of thee a great nation. 11. And Moses besought the LORD his God, and said, LORD, why doth thy wrath

4. The origin of this bull worship, which is a breach of the second commandment, is not to be traced to Egyptian influence. More likely it was rooted in the religious tendencies of the Hebrews themselves. "Among an agricultural people there would be no more natural symbol of strength and vital energy than the young bull" (Ott., 68). Aaron meant the people to understand that this bull was Jehovah Himself! Jeroboam said exactly the same (1 K. xii. 28)

wax hot against thy people, which thou hast brought forth out of the land of Egypt with great power, and with a mighty hand ? 12. Wherefore should the Egyptians speak, and say, For mischief did he bring them out, to slay them in the mountains, and to consume them from the face of the earth ? Turn from thy fierce wrath, and repent of this evil against thy people. 13. Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, thy servants, to whom thou swarest by thine own self, and saidst unto them, I will multiply your seed as the stars of heaven, and all this land that I have spoken of will I give unto your seed, and they shall inherit it for ever. 14. And the **LORD** repented of the evil which he thought to do unto his people.

Moses returned.—15. And Moses turned, and went down from the mount, and the two tables of the testimony were in his hand : the tables were written on both their sides ; on the one side and on the other were they written. 16. And the tables were the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God, graven upon the tables. 17. And when Joshua heard the noise of the people as they shouted, he said unto Moses, There is a noise of war in the camp. 18. And he said, It is not the voice of them that shout for mastery, neither is it the voice of them that cry for being overcome : but the noise of them that sing do I hear.

In indignation he breaks the tablets, and questions Aaron.—19. And it came to pass, as soon as he came nigh unto the camp, that he saw the calf, and the dancing : and Moses' anger waxed hot, and he cast the tables out of his hands, and brake them beneath the mount. 20. And he

17. From the brief remark in chap. xxiv. 13 (above, p. 52), we are apparently to gather that Joshua had been waiting for Moses on the mountain-side.

18. "It is not the shout of victory, nor the cry of defeat."

took the calf which they had made, and burnt it in the fire, and ground it to powder, and strawed it upon the water, and made the children of Israel drink of it. 21. And Moses said unto Aaron, What did this people unto thee, that thou hast brought so great a sin upon them ? 22. And Aaron said, Let not the anger of my lord wax hot : thou knowest the people, that they are set on mischief. 23. For they said unto me, Make us gods, which shall go before us : for as for this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him. 24. And I said unto them, Whosoever hath any gold, let them break it off. So they gave it me : then I cast it into the fire, and there came out this calf.

Moses also quells a civil rebellion, which Aaron had failed to check.—25. And when Moses saw that the people were broken loose ; (for Aaron had let them loose unto their shame among their enemies :) 26. then Moses stood in the gate of the camp, and said, Who is on the Lord's side ? let him come unto me. And all the sons of Levi gathered themselves together unto him. 27. And he said unto them, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Put every man his sword by his side, and go in and out from gate to gate throughout the camp, and slay every man his brother, and every man his companion, and every man his neighbour. 28. And the children of Levi did according to the word of Moses : and there fell of the people that day about three thousand men. 29. For Moses had said, Consecrate yourselves to day to the LORD, even every man upon his son, and upon his brother ; that he may bestow upon you a blessing this day.

For the fourth time Moses ascends ; he intercedes for the people.—30. And it came to pass on the morrow, that

Moses said unto the people, Ye have sinned a great sin : and now I will go up unto the LORD ; peradventure I shall make an atonement for your sin. 31. And Moses returned unto the LORD, and said, Oh, this people have sinned a great sin, and have made them gods of gold. 32. Yet now, if thou wilt forgive their sin— ; and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written. 33. And the LORD said unto Moses, Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book. 34. Therefore now go, lead the people unto the place of which I have spoken unto thee : behold, mine angel shall go before thee : nevertheless in the day when I visit I will visit their sin upon them. 35. And the LORD plagued the people, because they made the calf, which Aaron made.

5. GOD'S PROMISE AND REVELATION OF HIMSELF TO MOSES

Exodus xxxiii. 1-3, 12-23 ; xxxiv. 6-9

xxxiii. 1. And the LORD said unto Moses, Depart, and go up hence, thou and the people which thou hast brought up out of the land of Egypt, unto the land which I sware unto Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, saying, Unto thy seed will I give it : 3. unto a land flowing with milk and honey : for I will not go up in the midst of thee ; for thou art a stiffnecked people : lest I consume thee in the way.

Moses obtains God's promise of His presence during the wanderings.—12. And Moses said unto the LORD, See, thou sayest unto me, Bring up this people : and thou has, not let me know whom thou wilt send with me. Yet thou hast said, I know thee by name, and thou hast also found grace in my sight. 13. Now therefore, I pray thee

if I have found grace in thy sight, shew me now thy way, that I may know thee, that I may find grace in thy sight : and consider that this nation is thy people. 14. And he said, My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest. 15. And he said unto him, If thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence. 16. For wherein shall it be known here that I and thy people have found grace in thy sight ? is it not in that thou goest with us ? so shall we be separated, I and thy people, from all the people that are upon the face of the earth. 17. And the LORD said unto Moses, I will do this thing also that thou hast spoken : for thou hast found grace in my sight, and I know thee by name.

God shows His glory to Moses.—18. And he said, I beseech thee, shew me thy glory. 19. And he said, I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the LORD before thee ; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy. 20. And he said, Thou canst not see my face : for there shall no man see me, and live. 21. And the LORD said, Behold, there is a place by me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock : 22. and it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a clift of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by : 23. and I will take away mine hand, and thou shalt see my back parts : but my face shall not be seen. xxxiv. 6. And the LORD passed by before him, and proclaimed, The LORD, the LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, 7. keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty ; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon

the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation. 8. And Moses made haste, and bowed his head toward the earth, and worshipped. 9. And he said, If now I have found grace in thy sight, O Lord, let my Lord, I pray thee, go among us ; for it is a stiffnecked people ; and pardon our iniquity and our sin, and take us for thine inheritance.

6. RENEWAL OF THE TABLES

Exodus xxxiv. 1-5, 29-35

1. And the LORD said unto Moses, Hew thee two tables of stone like unto the first : and I will write upon these tables the words that were in the first tables, which thou brakest. 4. And he hewed two tables of stone like unto the first ; and Moses rose up early in the morning, and went up unto mount Sinai, as the LORD had commanded him, and took in his hand the two tables of stone. 5. And the LORD descended in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the LORD.

Shining of Moses' face.—29. And it came to pass, when Moses came down from mount Sinai with the two tables of testimony in Moses' hand, when he came down from the mount, that Moses wist not that the skin of his face shone while he talked with him. 30. And when Aaron and all the children of Israel saw Moses, behold, the skin of his face shone ; and they were afraid to come nigh him. 31. And Moses called unto them ; and Aaron and all the rulers of the congregation returned unto him : and Moses talked with them. 32. And afterward all the children of Israel came nigh : and he gave them in commandment all that the LORD had spoken with him in mount Sinai. 33. And

till Moses had done speaking with them, he put a vail on his face. 34. But when Moses went in before the **LORD** to speak with him, he took the vail off, until he came out. And he came out, and spake unto the children of Israel that which he was commanded. 35. And the children of Israel saw the face of Moses, that the skin of Moses' face shone: and Moses put the vail upon his face again, until he went in to speak with him.

7. THE TENT OF MEETING

Exodus xxxiii. 7-11

7. And Moses *used to* take the tent and to pitch it without the camp, afar off from the camp, and called it the *Tent of meeting*. And it came to pass, that every one which sought the **LORD** went out unto the tent of meeting which was without the camp. 8. And it came to pass, when Moses went out unto the tent that all the people rose up, and stood every man at his tent door, and looked after Moses until he was gone into the tent. 9. And it came to pass, as Moses entered into the tent, the cloudy pillar descended, and stood at the door of the tent, and the **LORD** talked with Moses. 10. And all the

34. **went in.** This refers to his entry into the Tent of Meeting, described in the next section.

The reason for the wearing of the veil no doubt was that the reflection of Jehovah's glory on Moses' face was too sacred and overpowering for ordinary human eyes constantly to gaze upon. St. Paul, however (2 Cor. iii. 13), gives a different reason: it was to prevent the people seeing the glory on Moses' face fade away. The religious idea of the narrative is obvious and profound—those who constantly abide in the Divine presence are gradually transformed in character.

7. This tent, where Jehovah *met* Moses, and in which Moses would learn the Divine will, is the simple original from which the idea of the Tabernacle and its ceremonial was afterwards developed,

people saw the cloudy pillar stand at the tent door: and all the people rose up and worshipped, every man in his tent door. 11. And the LORD spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend. And he turned again into the camp: but his servant Joshua, the son of Nun, a young man, departed not out of the tent.

11. **departed not.** Apparently one of the chief duties of Joshua, Moses' attendant, was to remain at the Tent during his master's absences, in order to safeguard so sacred a precinct.

PART III

FROM SINAI TO THE DEATH OF MOSES

TABĒRAH AND KIBROTH-HATTAAVAH

Numbers x. and xi

x. 11. And it came to pass on the twentieth day of the second month, in the second year, that the cloud was taken up from off the tabernacle of the testimony. 12. And the children of Israel took their journeys out of the wilderness of Sinai ; and the cloud rested in the wilderness of Paran. 33. And they departed from the mount of the LORD three days' journey : and the ark of the covenant of the LORD went before them in the three days' journey, to search out a resting place for them. 34. And the cloud of the LORD was upon them by day, when they went out of the camp. 35. And it came to pass, when the ark set forward, that Moses said, Rise up, LORD, and let thine enemies be scattered ; and let them that hate thee flee before thee. 36. And when it rested, he said, Return, O LORD, unto the many thousands of Israel.

Murmurers consumed by lightning.—xi. 1. And when the people complained, it displeased the LORD : and the LORD heard it ; and his anger was kindled ; and the fire of the LORD burnt among them, and consumed them that were in the uttermost parts of the camp. 2. And the people cried unto Moses ; and when Moses prayed unto

12. wilderness of Paran is the Sinaitic peninsula. Incidents at various halting-places in this desert are now to be recorded.

35. *Rise up, etc.* This 'watchword' is used as the opening verse of Psalm lxviii., though the Psalmist is not referring to the particular events of this chapter.

the LORD, the fire was quenched. 3. And he called the name of the place Taberah : because the fire of the LORD burnt among them.

At another halting-place flesh is demanded for food.—
 4. And the mixt multitude that was among them fell a lusting : and the children of Israel also wept again, and said, Who shall give us flesh to eat ? 5. We remember the fish, which we did eat in Egypt freely ; the cucumbers, and the melons, and the leeks, and the onions, and the garlick : 6. but now our soul is dried away : there is nothing at all, beside this manna, before our eyes.

Distress of Moses.— 10. Then Moses heard the people weep throughout their families, every man in the door of his tent : and the anger of the LORD was kindled greatly ; Moses also was displeased. 11. And Moses said unto the LORD, Wherefore hast thou afflicted thy servant ? and wherefore have I not found favour in thy sight, that thou layest the burden of all this people upon me ? 12. Have I conceived all this people ? have I begotten them, that thou shouldest say unto me, Carry them in thy bosom, as a nursing father beareth the sucking child, unto the land which thou swarest unto their fathers ? 13. Whence should I have flesh to give unto all this people ? for they weep unto me, saying, Give us flesh, that we may eat. 14. I am not able to bear all this people alone, because it is too heavy for me. 15. And if thou deal thus with me, kill me, I pray thee, out of hand, if I have found favour in thy sight ; and let me not see my wretchedness.

3. *Taberah* = burning.

10 seq. A touching commentary on this passage is Psalm xc. : " Lord, thou hast been our Refuge," which though probably not written by Moses himself, has always rightly been held to echo the voice of his complaints.

God comforts him.—16. And the LORD said unto Moses, Gather unto me seventy men of the elders of Israel, whom thou knowest to be the elders of the people, and officers over them ; and bring them unto the tabernacle of the congregation, that they may stand there with thee. 17. And I will come down and talk with thee there : and I will take of the spirit which is upon thee, and will put it upon them ; and they shall bear the burden of the people with thee, that thou bear it not thyself alone. 18. And say thou unto the people, Sanctify yourselves against to morrow, and ye shall eat flesh : for ye have wept in the ears of the LORD, saying, Who shall give us flesh to eat ? for it was well with us in Egypt : therefore the LORD will give you flesh, and ye shall eat. 19. Ye shall not eat one day, nor two days, nor five days, neither ten days, nor twenty days : 20. but even a whole month, until it come out at your nostrils, and it be loathsome unto you : because that ye have despised the LORD which is among you, and have wept before him, saying, Why came we forth out of Egypt ? 21. And Moses said, The people, among whom I am, are six hundred thousand footmen ; and thou hast said, I will give them flesh, that they may eat a whole month. 22. Shall the flocks and the herds be slain for them, to suffice them ? or shall all the fish of the sea be gathered together for them, to suffice them ? 23. And the LORD said unto Moses, Is the LORD's hand waxed short ? thou shalt see now whether my word shall come to pass unto thee or not.

Appointment of seventy elders to help Moses.—24. And Moses went out, and told the people the words of the LORD, and gathered the seventy men of the elders of the people,

16. Compare the preliminary organisation suggested by Jethro, p. 15.

and set them round about the tabernacle. 25. And the LORD came down in a cloud, and spake unto him, and took of the spirit that was upon him, and gave it unto the seventy elders: and it came to pass, that, when the spirit rested upon them, they prophesied, and did not cease. 26. But there remained two of the men in the camp, the name of the one was Eldad, and the name of the other Medad: and the spirit rested upon them; and they were of them that were written, but went not out unto the tabernacle: and they prophesied in the camp. 27. And there ran a young man, and told Moses, and said, Eldad and Medad do prophesy in the camp. 28. And Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of Moses, one of his young men, answered and said, My lord Moses, forbid them. 29. And Moses said unto him, Enviest thou for my sake? would God that all the LORD's people were prophets, and that the LORD would put his spirit upon them! 30. And Moses gat him into the camp, he and the elders of Israel.

Quails are sent.—31. And there went forth a wind from the LORD, and brought quails from the sea, and let them fall by the camp, as it were a day's journey on this side, and as it were a day's journey on the other side, round about the camp, and as it were two cubits high upon the face of the earth. 32. And the people stood up all that day, and all that night, and all the next day, and they gathered the quails: he that gathered least gathered ten homers: and they spread them all abroad for themselves round about the camp. 33. And while the flesh was yet between their teeth, ere it was chewed, the wrath of the

26. *them that were written*: *i.e.* they were members of the seventy whom Moses had summoned. 28. Cf. John's remark in St. Mark ix. 38.

32. *homers*. A homer is a much larger quantity than the omer of Exod. xvi. It is said to = 11 bushels.

LORD was kindled against the people, and the LORD smote the people with a very great plague. 34. And he called the name of that place Kibroth-hattaavah : because there they buried the people that lusted.

JEALOUSY OF AARON AND MIRIAM AT HAZEROOTH
Numbers xii

xi. 35. And the people journeyed from Kibroth-hattaavah unto Hazereth ; and abode at Hazereth. xii. 1. And Miriam and Aaron spake against Moses because of the Ethiopian woman whom he had married : for he had married an Ethiopian woman. 2. And they said, Hath the LORD indeed spoken only by Moses ? hath he not spoken also by us ? And the LORD heard it. 3. (Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth.) 4. And the LORD spake suddenly unto Moses, and unto Aaron, and unto Miriam, Come out ye three unto the tabernacle of the congregation. And they three came out. 5. And the LORD came down in the pillar of the cloud, and stood in the door of the tabernacle, and called 'Aaron and Miriam : and they both came forth. 6. And he said, Hear now my words : If there be a prophet among you, I the LORD will make myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream. 7. My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all mine house. 8. With him will I speak mouth to

34. **Kibroth-hattaavah** = Graves of Lust. For these scenes *cf.* St. Paul, 1 Cor. x. 10. " Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer. Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples : and they are written for our admonition."

1. **Ethiopian wife**—not heard of elsewhere in O.T.

6-8. Moses is greater than any one else, even than a prophet, or mouthpiece of the Lord, like Aaron : for to him alone Jehovah speaks face to face.

mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches: and the similitude of the LORD shall he behold: wherefore then were ye not afraid to speak against my servant Moses? 9. And the anger of the LORD was kindled against them; and he departed.

Punishment of Miriam.—10. And the cloud departed from off the tabernacle; and, behold, Miriam became leprous, white as snow: and Aaron looked upon Miriam, and, behold, she was leprous. 11. And Aaron said unto Moses, Alas, my lord, I beseech thee, lay not the sin upon us, wherein we have done foolishly, and wherein we have sinned. 12. Let her not be as one dead, of whom the flesh is half consumed when he cometh out of his mother's womb. 13. And Moses cried unto the LORD, saying, Heal her now, O God, I beseech thee.

14. And the LORD said unto Moses, If her father had but spit in her face, should she not be ashamed seven days? let her be shut out from the camp seven days, and after that let her be received in again. 15. And Miriam was shut out from the camp seven days: and the people journeyed not till Miriam was brought in again. 16. And afterward the people removed from Hazeroth, and pitched in the wilderness of Paran.

MISSION OF THE SPIES AND ITS CONSEQUENCE. THE CONQUEST OF CANAAN DELAYED FOR 38 YEARS

Numbers xiii., xiv

xiii. 1. And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, 2. Send thou men, that they may search the land of Canaan,

xiii. 1. The caravan had now reached Kadesh, on the northern edge of the Wilderness of Paran, about sixty miles south-west of the Dead Sea.

which I give unto the children of Israel: of every tribe of their fathers shall ye send a man, every one a ruler among them. 17. And Moses sent them to spy out the land of Canaan. 22. And they ascended by the south and came unto Hebron, where the children of Anak were. 23. And they came unto the brook of Eshcol, and cut down from thence a branch with one cluster of grapes, and they bare it between two upon a staff; and they brought of the pomegranates, and of the figs. 24. The place was called the brook Eshcol, because of the cluster of grapes which the children of Israel cut down from thence. 25. And they returned from searching of the land after forty days.

Return of the scouts.—26. And they went and came to Moses, and to Aaron, and to all the congregation of the children of Israel, unto the wilderness of Paran, to Kadesh; and brought back word unto them, and unto all the congregation, and shewed them the fruit of the land. 27. And they told him, and said, We came unto the land whither thou sentest us, and surely it floweth with milk and honey; and this is the fruit of it. 28. Nevertheless the people be strong that dwell in the land, and the cities are walled, and very great: and moreover we saw the children of Anak there. 29. The Amalekites dwell in the land of the south: and the Hittites, and the Jebusites, and the Amorites,

22. *south*, *i.e.* the south country or Negeb, the “steep and haggard ridges” stretching southward from Hebron to many miles below Beer-sheba. For a description see G. A. Smith, *Hist. Geog. of Holy Land*, pp. 278 *seq.*

Hebron. There are duplicate narratives interwoven in these chapters: the later one (P) makes the scouts penetrate as far as Rehob, far north of Damascus. This would have been difficult in forty days (verse 25). **Children of Anak.** The Anākim were a giant race of formidable fighters dwelling round Hebron. They were driven out by Joshua later on (Josh. xi. 21).

29. **Amorites**, etc. For the inhabitants of the land to be conquered see below, p. 103.

dwell in the mountains: and the Canaanites dwell by the sea, and by the coast of Jordan.

Indignation of the people.—xiv. 1. And all the congregation lifted up their voice, and cried; and the people wept that night. 2. And all the children of Israel murmured against Moses and against Aaron: and the whole congregation said unto them, Would God that we had died in the land of Egypt! or would God we had died in this wilderness! 3. And wherefore hath the LORD brought us unto this land, to fall by the sword, that our wives and our children should be a prey? were it not better for us to return into Egypt? 4. And they said one to another, Let us make a captain, and let us return into Egypt. 5. Then Moses and Aaron fell on their faces before all the assembly of the congregation of the children of Israel. 6. And Joshua the son of Nun, and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, which were of them that searched the land, rent their clothes: 7. and they spake unto all the company of the children of Israel, saying, The land, which we have passed through to search it, is an exceeding good land. 8. If the LORD delight in us, then he will bring us into this land, and give it us; a land which floweth with milk and honey. 9. Only rebel not ye against the LORD, neither fear ye the people of the land; for they are bread for us: their defence is departed from them, and the LORD is with us: fear them not. 10. But all the congregation bade stone them with stones. And the glory of the LORD appeared in the tabernacle of the congregation before all the children of Israel.

God's terrible punishment.—26. And the LORD spake unto Moses and unto Aaron, saying, 27. How long shall

9. bread: *i.e.* they will prove an easy prey.

I bear with this evil congregation, which murmur against me? I have heard the murmurings of the children of Israel, which they murmur against me. 28. Say unto them, As truly as I live, saith the LORD, as ye have spoken in mine ears, so will I do to you: 29. your carcases shall fall in this wilderness; and all that were numbered of you, according to your whole number, from twenty years old and upward, which have murmured against me, 30. doubtless ye shall not come into the land, concerning which I sware to make you dwell therein, save Caleb the son of Jephunneh, and Joshua the son of Nun. 31. But your little ones, which ye said should be a prey, them will I bring in, and they shall know the land which ye have despised. 33. And your children shall wander in the wilderness forty years, until your carcases be wasted in the wilderness. 34. After the number of the days in which ye searched the land, even forty days, each day for a year, shall ye bear your iniquities, even forty years.

Death of the scouts.—36. And the men, which Moses sent to search the land, who returned, and made all the congregation to murmur against him, by bringing up a slander upon the land, 37. even those men that did bring up the evil report upon the land, died by the plague before the LORD. 38. But Joshua the son of Nun, and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, which were of the men that went to search the land, lived still.

In desperation, an unsuccessful attack is made on the natives.—40. And they rose up early in the morning, and gat them up into the top of the mountain, saying, Lo, we be here, and will go up unto the place which the LORD hath promised: for we have sinned. 41. And Moses said, Wherefore now do ye transgress the commandment

of the LORD ? but it shall not prosper. 42. Go not up, for the LORD is not among you ; 44. but they presumed to go up unto the hill top: nevertheless the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and Moses, departed not out of the camp. 45. Then the Amalekites came down, and the Canaanites which dwelt in that hill, and smote them, and discomfited them, even unto Hormah.

THE THIRTY-EIGHT YEARS AT KADESH AND IN THE
WILDERNESS OF PARAN

(a) *Rebellion of Dathan and Abiram*

Numbers xvi

1. And Dathan and Abiram, sons of Reuben, took men : 2. and they rose up before Moses. 12. And Moses sent to call Dathan and Abiram : which said, We will not come up. 13. Is it a small thing that thou hast brought us up out of a land that floweth with milk and honey, to

45. **Hormah**: in the hill country ("that hill") north of Kadesh, on the direct route to Hebron, by which a vain attempt is here made to enter the promised country. Two years had now passed since the Exodus ; the younger and stronger generation, thirty-eight years later, made their attack by the eastern route, *i.e.* by making a detour south and east across the Arabah to the east side of Mount Seir and the Dead Sea, though they humbled Arad the Canaanite at this same place, Hormah, before starting (xxi. 1-3).

1. Driver, *L.O.T.*, p. 59, has clearly disentangled the three incidents which have become welded together by redactors in these two chapters. (1) There is a rebellion of laymen, headed by Dathan and Abiram, against the civil authority of *Moses*. They complain that his promises are unfulfilled (verse 14), they resent his authority (13b) and his judgeship (15b). This is from JE. (2) Korah, at the head of 250 princes, questions the religious authority of the tribe of *Levi*. He claims that all the congregation are holy, and protests against the limitation of priesthood to a single tribe. (3) This narrative was later enlarged, and Korah is represented as joining with 250 Levites against the pre-eminence of *Aaron* and his sons. These last two records are from P. The two Korah stories have been omitted from the present volume.

kill us in the wilderness, except thou make thyself altogether a prince over us ? 14. Moreover thou hast not brought us into a land that floweth with milk and honey, or given us inheritance of fields and vineyards : wilt thou put out the eyes of these men ? we will not come up. 15. And Moses was very wroth, and said unto the LORD, Respect not thou their offering : I have not taken one ass from them, neither have I hurt one of them. 25. And Moses rose up and went unto Dathan and Abiram ; and the elders of Israel followed him. 26. And he spake unto the congregation, saying, Depart, I pray you, from the tents of these wicked men, and touch nothing of theirs, lest ye be consumed in all their sins. 27. And Dathan and Abiram came out, and stood in the door of their tents, and their wives, and their sons, and their little children. 28. And Moses said, Hereby ye shall know that the LORD hath sent me to do all these works ; for I have not done them of mine own mind. 29. If these men die the common death of all men, or if they be visited after the visitation of all men ; then the LORD hath not sent me. 30. But if the LORD make a new thing, and the earth open her mouth, and swallow them up, with all that appertain unto them, and they go down quick into the pit ; then ye shall understand that these men have provoked the LORD.

Their punishment.—31. And it came to pass, as he had made an end of speaking all these words, that the ground clave asunder that was under them : 32. and the earth

14. these men, presumably means Dathan and his partisans.

27, 33. Observe the primitive morality of the punishment by which the sins of fathers are visited also on the children ; cf. the punishment of Achan, below, p. 114. And contrast Ezekiel's doctrine, in later days, of individual responsibility, each man for his own, not his father's, sins : "The soul that sinneth, it shall die" (Ezek. xviii.).

opened her mouth, and swallowed them up, and their houses, and all their goods. 33. They, and all that appertained to them, went down alive into the pit, and the earth closed upon them: and they perished from among the congregation. 34. And all Israel that were round about them fled at the cry of them: for they said, Lest the earth swallow us up also.

(b) Vindication of the Exclusive Right of Levites to the Priesthood

Numbers xvii

1. And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, 2. Speak unto the children of Israel, and take every one of them a rod according to the house of their fathers, of all their princes according to the house of their fathers twelve rods: write thou every man's name upon his rod. 3. And thou shalt write Aaron's name upon the rod of Levi: for one rod shall be for the head of the house of their fathers. 4. And thou shalt lay them up in the tabernacle of the congregation before the testimony, where I will meet with you. 5. And it shall come to pass, that the man's rod, whom I shall choose, shall blossom: and I will make to cease from me the murmurings of the children of Israel, whereby they murmur against you.

6. And Moses spake unto the children of Israel, and every one of their princes gave him a rod apiece, for each prince one, according to their fathers' houses, even twelve rods: and the rod of Aaron was among their rods. 7. And Moses laid up the rods before the LORD in the tabernacle

1. Korah and his friends had already been punished for trying to dispute the Levites' prerogative by "fire from the Lord" (Num. xvi.). This chapter records a further visible proof of the justice of the Levitical claims (see (2) in note 2, page 72).

of witness. 8. And it came to pass, that on the morrow Moses went into the tabernacle of witness ; and, behold, the rod of Aaron for the house of Levi was budded, and brought forth buds, and bloomed blossoms, and yielded almonds. 9. And Moses brought out all the rods from before the LORD unto all the children of Israel : and they looked, and took every man his rod.

Aaron's rod is preserved before the Ark.—10. And the LORD said unto Moses, Bring Aaron's rod again before the testimony, to be kept for a token against the rebels ; and thou shalt quite take away their murmurings from me, that they die not. 11. And Moses did so: as the LORD commanded him, so did he. 12. And the children of Israel spake unto Moses, saying, Behold, we die, we perish, we all perish. 13. Whosoever cometh any thing near unto the tabernacle of the LORD shall die: shall we be consumed with dying ?

(c) *Death of Miriam; Meribah*

Numbers xx. 1-13

1. And the people abode in Kadesh ; and Miriam died there, and was buried there.

The Waters of Strife.—2. And there was no water for the congregation : and they gathered themselves together against Moses and against Aaron. 6. And Moses and Aaron went from the presence of the assembly unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and they fell upon their faces : and the glory of the LORD appeared unto them.

12, 13 represent the people as acquiescing in these claims thus approved by God.

1. "Tradition represents Miriam as sharing with her two brothers the burden of leadership (Mic. vi. 4)."—Ott.

Moses spake unadvisedly with his lips.—7. And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, 8. Take the rod, and gather thou the assembly together, thou, and Aaron thy brother, and speak ye unto the rock before their eyes ; and it shall give forth his water, and thou shalt bring forth to them water out of the rock : so thou shalt give the congregation and their beasts drink. 9. And Moses took the rod from before the LORD, as he commanded him. 10. And Moses and Aaron gathered the congregation together before the rock, and he said unto them, Hear now, ye rebels ; must we fetch you water out of this rock ? 11. And Moses lifted up his hand, and with his rod he smote the rock twice : and the water came out abundantly, and the congregation drank, and their beasts also.

Rejection of Moses and Aaron for lack of faith and patience.—12. And the LORD spake unto Moses and Aaron, Because ye believed me not, to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them. 13. This is the water of Meribah : because the children of Israel strove with the LORD, and he was sanctified in them.

EMBASSY TO EDOM ; DEPARTURE FROM KADESH ; DEATH OF AARON

Numbers xx. 14-29 ; xxi. 4-9

xx. 14. And Moses sent messengers from Kadesh unto the king of Edom, Thus saith thy brother Israel, Thou

12. The incident at Meribah showed that Moses, after the many trials of patience to which he had been subjected, was no longer a leader of suitable character for this difficult work. He was therefore to be displaced by a younger and hardier captain, Joshua.

14. The years of waiting prescribed by Jehovah—thirty-eight in the wilderness and two between Egypt and Sinai—were now at an end. This period had been important to the Israelites. (1) A

knowest all the travail that hath befallen us: 15. how our fathers went down into Egypt, and we have dwelt in Egypt a long time; and the Egyptians vexed us, and our fathers: 16. and when we cried unto the LORD, he heard our voice, and sent an angel, and hath brought us forth out of Egypt: and, behold, we are in Kadesh, a city in the uttermost of thy border: 17. let us pass, I pray thee, through thy country: we will not pass through the fields, or through the vineyards, neither will we drink of the water of the wells: we will go by the king's high way, we will not turn to the right hand nor to the left, until we have passed thy borders. 18. And Edom said unto him, Thou shalt not pass by me, lest I come out against thee with the sword. 19. And the children of Israel said unto him, We will go by the high way: and if I and my cattle drink of thy water, then I will pay for it: I will only, without doing any thing else, go through on my feet. 20. And he said, Thou shalt not go through.

young and strong generation, inured to Moses' leadership, had now replaced the contentious folk who had come out of Egypt. The Exodus folk had been fugitives who had escaped from slavery in Egypt, and they had exhibited often the violent and rude characteristics of runaway slaves. (2) This new generation had been trained and consolidated into a well-disciplined and harder army, fitted for conquest. (3) Moses' legislation had been, probably, expanded and, certainly, put to the test of practical experience. (4) Religion and morality had taken deeper root in the heart of the people.

The plan of operations now was to march north-east, to take the land east of the Dead Sea and of Jordan first, and to assail Canaan from that side. But the kingdom of Edom lay to the east of Kadesh, stretching up to the Dead Sea; on failing to obtain a passage through this territory the host marched south, passing mount Hor on the south and east, and, turning the southern frontier of Edom by the Gulf of Akāba, they came up on its eastern border (consult map). Perhaps it was because Edom was of kindred race to Israel ("thy brother Israel") that the latter did not force a passage with the sword on this occasion. Hereafter, almost continuously through her history, Israel maintained a bitter hostility to Edom (see vol. v, p. 105, etc.).

And Edom came out against him with much people, and with a strong hand. 21. Thus Edom refused to give Israel passage through his border: wherefore Israel turned away from him.

Eleazar succeeds Aaron.—22. And the children of Israel, even the whole congregation, journeyed from Kadesh, and came unto mount Hor. 23. And the LORD spake unto Moses and Aaron in mount Hor, by the coast of the land of Edom, saying, 24. Aaron shall be gathered unto his people: for he shall not enter into the land which I have given unto the children of Israel, because ye rebelled against my word at the water of Meribah. 25. Take Aaron and Eleazar his son, and bring them up unto mount Hor: 26. and strip Aaron of his garments, and put them upon Eleazar his son: and Aaron shall be gathered unto his people, and shall die there. 27. And Moses did as the LORD commanded: and they went up into mount Hor in the sight of all the congregation. 28. And Moses stripped Aaron of his garments, and put them upon Eleazar his son; and Aaron died there in the top of the mount: and Moses and Eleazar came down from the mount. 29. And when all the congregation saw that Aaron was dead, they mourned for Aaron thirty days, even all the house of Israel.

The Fiery Serpent.—xxi. 4. And they journeyed from mount Hor by the way of the Red sea, to compass the land of Edom: and the soul of the people was much discouraged because of the way. 5. And the people spake against God, and against Moses. 6. And the LORD sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and much people of Israel died. 7. Therefore the people came to Moses, and said, We have sinned, for we have spoken against the LORD, and against thee;

pray unto the LORD, that he take away the serpents from us. And Moses prayed for the people. 8. And the LORD said unto Moses, Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole: and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live. 9. And Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole, and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived.

CONQUEST OF THE COUNTRY EAST OF JORDAN

Having journeyed round Edom and Mount Seir, Israel crossed the brook Zered into desolate country, and thence reached the river Arnon, between Moab and the territory of the Amorite chief Sihon, who had invaded this district and fixed his capital at Heshbon. Having overthrown first this prince and then the Amorite chief Og, whose capital, Edrei, was further north, in Bashan, they became masters of Gilead and of all the east country from the river Arnon up to the sea of Chinnereth (Galilee). At a later period, probably after the settlement of the west, they also conquered the region of Argob (Trachonitis), north-east of Bashan. The territory thus acquired was assigned, under condition of their rendering assistance in the subjugation of Canaan itself, to Reuben, Gad, and

xxi. 9. This brazen serpent was preserved until the time of Hezekiah (727 B.C.), who "brake in pieces the brazen serpent that Moses had made; for unto those days the children of Israel did burn incense to it; and he called it Nehushtan"—i.e. "the brazen thing" (2 Kings xviii. 4). But the narrative from Numbers perhaps is an example of an "ætiological story"—i.e. a later tradition accounting for a familiar monument the origin of which was forgotten.

half of Manasseh. A fragment of poetry records the delight of the “desert-wearied” army at finding itself at last in a well-watered land.

THE SONG OF THE WELL

Numbers xxi. 17, 18

Spring up, O well ; sing ye unto it :
 The well which the princes digged,
 Which the nobles of the people delved,
 With the sceptre, and with their staves. (R.V.)

Another fragment preserves a war-song, an ode for the victory over Sihon (verses 27-30) ; and another again is quoted by the compiler from “The Book of the Wars of the Lord,” describing the natural features of the conquered territory (verses 14, 15).¹

BALAK AND BALAAM

Numbers xxii.-xxiv

xxii. 1. And the children of Israel set forward, and pitched in the plains of Moab on this side of Jordan by Jericho. 2. And Balak the son of Zippor saw all that

¹ In these quotations, as in the references to the book of Jasher (Josh. x. 13, etc.), the compiler gives us a hint as to the character of the oldest literary records from which the Hebrew historians developed their narratives. See Gilbert Murray’s *Rise of the Greek Epic*, pp. 101 seq., for a suggestive comparison between the Hebrew and the Greek methods of treating the earliest fragments of their national story.

xxii. 1. by Jericho, *i.e.* east of the river, opposite Jericho. Moses’ main camp was situated here during and after the conquest of the East. Moab was too weak to resist the Hebrew invasion ; but his land was not occupied nor had any warlike operations been taken against him, in obedience to a Divine command (Deut. ii. 9). Moab was partially colonised now, as in later days, by Midianites from the south-east (east shore of Gulf of Akāba). For Moab lay open to the east and to the “great deserts, out of which, in every

Israel had done to the Amorites. 3. And Moab was sore afraid of the people, because they were many: and Moab was distressed because of the children of Israel. 4. And Moab said unto the elders of Midian, Now shall this company lick up all that are round about us, as the ox licketh up the grass of the field. And Balak the son of Zippor was king of the Moabites at that time.

In terror Balak solicits the aid of a famous Eastern soothsayer.—5. He sent messengers therefore unto Balaam the son of Beor to Pethor, which is by the river of the land of the children of his people, to call him, saying, Behold, there is a people come out from Egypt: behold, they cover the face of the earth, and they abide over against me: 6. come now therefore, I pray thee, curse me this people; for they are too mighty for me: peradventure I shall prevail, that we may smite them, and that I may drive them out of the land: for I wot that he whom thou blessest is blessed, and he whom thou cursest is cursed. 7. And the elders of Moab and the elders of Midian departed with the rewards of divination in their hand; and they came

age, wild and hungry tribes have been ready to swarm." (G. A. Smith, *Hist. Geog. of the Holy Land*, p. 261.) On this occasion the "wiles" of the Midianites and the heathen rites of the Moabites seduced many of the Hebrews from allegiance to Jehovah. This led to a plague from Heaven on Israel and a military assault on the Midianites, who were utterly routed and their villages destroyed (ch. xxv.).

It is clear that there are three independent and inconsistent stories of Balaam in the text of Numbers as we have it. (1) Num. xxxi. 8-16 (P), according to which Balaam is a Midianite who seduced the Jews into immoral practices, and was presently slain for it; (2) and (3) Num. xxii.-xxiv. (JE). Here J makes Balaam act without reproach, E makes him a "selfish, grasping man." The combination of J and E in our text produces a story which is not consistent, so that the character of Balaam is a puzzle. He appears "a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways." See Hastings, *D.B.*

5. the river . . . people simply means "the river of Balaam's native land" i.e. the Euphrates.

unto Balaam, and spake unto him the words of Balak.

8. And he said unto them, Lodge here this night, and I will bring you word again, as the **LORD** shall speak unto me: and the princes of Moab abode with Balaam. 9. And God came unto Balaam, and said, What men are these with thee? 10. And Balaam said unto God, Balak the son of Zippor, king of Moab, hath sent unto me, saying, 11. Behold, there is a people come out of Egypt, which covereth the face of the earth: come now, curse me them; peradventure I shall be able to overcome them, and drive them out. 12. And God said unto Balaam, Thou shalt not go with them; thou shalt not curse the people: for they are blessed. 13. And Balaam rose up in the morning, and said unto the princes of Balak, Get you into your land: for the **LORD** refuseth to give me leave to go with you. 14. And the princes of Moab rose up, and they went unto Balak, and said, Balaam refuseth to come with us.

*A second embassy is successful.—*15. And Balak sent yet again princes, more, and more honourable than they. 16. And they came to Balaam, and said to him, Thus saith Balak the son of Zippor, Let nothing, I pray thee, hinder thee from coming unto me: 17. for I will promote thee unto very great honour, and I will do whatsoever thou sayest unto me: come therefore, I pray thee, curse me this people. 18. And Balaam answered and said unto the servants of Balak, If Balak would give me his house full of silver and gold, I cannot go beyond the word of the **LORD** my God, to do less or more. 19. Now therefore, I pray you, tarry ye also here this night, that I may know what the **LORD** will say unto me more. 20. And God came unto Balaam at night, and said unto him, If the men come to call thee, rise up, and go with them; but yet

the word which I shall say unto thee, that shalt thou do.
21. And Balaam rose up in the morning, and saddled his ass, and went with the princes of Moab.

The dumb ass spake.—22. And God's anger was kindled because he went: and the angel of the LORD stood in the way for an adversary against him. Now he was riding upon his ass, and his two servants were with him. 23. And the ass saw the angel of the LORD standing in the way, and his sword drawn in his hand: and the ass turned aside out of the way, and went into the field: and Balaam smote the ass, to turn her into the way. 24. But the angel of the LORD stood in a path of the vineyards, a wall being on this side, and a wall on that side. 25. And when the ass saw the angel of the LORD, she thrust herself unto the wall, and crushed Balaam's foot against the wall: and he smote her again. 26. And the angel of the LORD went further, and stood in a narrow place, where was no way to turn either to the right hand or to the left. 27. And when the ass saw the angel of the LORD, she fell down under Balaam: and Balaam's anger was kindled, and he smote the ass with a staff. 28. And the LORD opened the mouth of the ass, and she said unto Balaam, What have I done unto thee, that thou hast smitten me these three times? 29. And Balaam said unto the ass, Because thou hast mocked me: I would there were a sword in mine hand, for now would I kill thee. 30. And the ass said unto Balaam, Am not I thine ass, upon which thou hast ridden ever since I was thine unto this day? was I ever wont to do so unto thee? And he said, Nay. 31. Then the LORD opened the eyes of Balaam, and he saw the angel of the

28. The voice of the "dumb ass" represents conscience which will not be silenced.

LORD standing in the way, and his sword drawn in his hand: and he bowed down his head, and fell flat on his face. 32. And the angel of the LORD said unto him, Wherefore hast thou smitten thine ass these three times? behold, I went out to withstand thee, because thy way is perverse before me: 33. and the ass saw me, and turned from me these three times: unless she had turned from me, surely now also I had slain thee, and saved her alive. 34. And Balaam said unto the angel of the LORD, I have sinned; for I knew not that thou stoodest in the way against me: now therefore, if it displease thee, I will get me back again. 35. And the angel of the Lord said unto Balaam, Go with the men: but only the word that I shall speak unto thee, that thou shalt speak. So Balaam went with the princes of Balak.

Balaam arrives in Moab.—36. And when Balak heard that Balaam was come, he went out to meet him. 41. And it came to pass on the morrow, that Balak took Balaam, and brought him up into the high places of Baal, that thence he might see the utmost part of the people. xxiii. 1. And Balaam said unto Balak, Build me here seven altars, and prepare me here seven oxen and seven rams. 2. And Balak did as Balaam had spoken; and Balak and Balaam offered on every altar a bullock and a ram.

He prophesies.—7. And he took up his parable, and said, Balak the king of Moab hath brought me from Aram, out of the mountains of the east, saying, Come, curse me Jacob, and come, defy Israel.

8. How shall I curse, whom God hath not cursed? or how shall I defy, whom the LORD hath not defied?

9. For from the top of the rocks I see him, and from

7. **Aram** = the Highland, *i.e.* the land stretching to the Tigris and Euphrates from the frontier of Palestine.

the hills I behold him : lo, the people shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations.

10. Who can count the dust of Jacob, and the number of the fourth part of Israel ? Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his !

11. And Balak said unto Balaam, What hast thou done unto me ? I took thee to curse mine enemies, and, behold, thou hast blessed them altogether. 12. And he answered and said, Must I not take heed to speak that which the LORD hath put in my mouth ? 13. and Balak said unto him, Come, I pray thee, with me unto another place from whence thou mayest see them : thou shalt see but the utmost part of them, and shalt not see them all : and curse me them from thence.

His second utterance.—14. And he brought him into the field of Zophim, to the top of Pisgah, 17. and Balak said unto him, What hath the LORD spoken ? 18. and he took up his parable, and said,

Rise up, Balak, and hear ; hearken unto me, thou son of Zippor :

19. God is not a man, that he should lie ; neither the son

9. shall not be reckoned, etc. *i.e.* Israel shall be *the* chosen people, not merely one among many equal nations.

10. Let me, etc. Means "May I in my last moments have the satisfaction of feeling that I have lived a righteous life to the very end," like Jacob and the other ancestors of these Israelites. See Hastings, *D.B.*, "Balaam."

13b. Obviously Balaam was now to be placed where an intervening spur of the hill should conveniently cut off his view of the part of the host nearest to him. Balak clearly thought that Balaam's utterances entirely depended on the view which he got ; Balak therefore tried to influence him by changing the point of view.

14. Pisgah is part of Mount Nebo, ten miles east of the north end of the Dead Sea. For a vivid description of the magnificent view obtained from these promontories on the western edge of the Moabite plateau see G. A. Smith, *Hist. Geog. of the Holy Land*, p. 562.

of man, that he should repent : hath he said, and shall he not do it ? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good ?

20. Behold, I have received commandment to bless : and he hath blessed ; and I cannot reverse it.

21. He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath he seen perverseness in Israel : the LORD his God is with him, and the shout of a king is among them.

22. God brought them out of Egypt ; he hath as it were the strength of an unicorn.

23. Surely there is no enchantment against Jacob, neither is there any divination against Israel : now it shall be said of Jacob and of Israel, What hath God wrought !

24. Behold, the people shall rise up as a great lion, and lift up himself as a young lion : he shall not lie down until he eat of the prey, and drink the blood of the slain.

Balak, disappointed, makes a third attempt to elicit a curse on Israel.—25. And Balak said unto Balaam, Neither curse them at all, nor bless them at all. 26. But Balaam answered and said unto Balak, Told not I thee, saying, All that the LORD speaketh, that I must do ? 27. And Balak said unto Balaam, Come, I pray thee, I will bring thee unto another place ; peradventure it will please God that thou mayest curse me them from thence. 28. And Balak brought Balaam unto the top of Peor, that looketh toward Jeshimon.

Balaam's parable.—xxiv. 1. And when Balaam saw that it pleased the LORD to bless Israel, he went not, as

28. **Peor**, a high point seven miles south of Pisgah, on the eastern shore of the Dead Sea. From it the high desert of **Jeshimon** (= *the waste*), on the western side of the Dead Sea, is plainly visible.

xxiv. 1 Balaam desired no longer vainly to seek for signs against Israel : his mind was made up to bless them.

at other times, to seek for enchantments, but he set his face toward the wilderness. 2. And Balaam lifted up his eyes, and he saw Israel abiding in his tents according to their tribes ; and the spirit of God came upon him. 3. And he took up his parable, and said, Balaam the son of Beor hath said, and the man whose eyes are open hath said : 4. he hath said, which heard the words of God, which saw the vision of the Almighty, falling into a trance, but having his eyes open :

5. How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob, and thy tabernacles, O Israel !

6. As the valleys are they spread forth, as gardens by the river's side, as the trees of lign aloes which the LORD hath planted, and as cedar trees beside the waters.

7. Water shall flow from his buckets, and his seed shall be in many waters, and his king shall be higher than Agag, and his kingdom shall be exalted.

8. God brought him forth out of Egypt ; he hath as it were the strength of an unicorn : he shall eat up the nations his enemies, and shall break their bones, and pierce them through with his arrows.

3 *seqq.* This prophecy, though based on ancient tradition, belongs in its present form to the age of the early monarchy. It reflects the hopes popularly connected with the establishment of the monarchy. It takes its place in the series of "Messianic" predictions. The main thought is : (a) Israel is peculiarly protected by the Almighty against all enemies ; (b) future dominion is her rightful portion. In verse 17 we may trace a reference to some individual king, possibly David himself, through whom Israel's magnificent destiny was to be realised. The prophecy belongs to a time when the Messianic vision in its strict sense—*i.e.* the vision of an all-conquering Davidic king with world-wide sovereignty—had already dawned upon Israel. (Ott. 79.)

6. The lign aloe is a valuable aromatic wood much used for making incense. The tree grows to a height of 120 feet. It is a tropical tree, and has nothing to do with our English aloe.

7. Agag seems to be used here as a general title for the kings of Amalek, like Pharaoh of Egypt. (Murray's I.B.D.)

9. He couched, he lay down as a lion, and as a great lion : who shall stir him up ? Blessed is he that blesseth thee, and cursed is he that curseth thee.

*In spite of Balak's angry interruptions Balaam continues his oracle.—*17. I shall see him, but not now : I shall behold him, but not nigh : there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth.

18. And Edom shall be a possession, Seir also shall be a possession for his enemies ; and Israel shall do valiantly.

19. Out of Jacob shall come he that shall have dominion, and shall destroy him that remaineth of the city.

20. And when he looked on Amalek, he took up his parable, and said, Amalek was the first of the nations ; but his latter end shall be that he perish for ever.

21. And he looked on the Kenites, and took up his parable, and said, Strong is thy dwellingplace, and thou puttest thy nest in a rock.

22. Nevertheless the Kenite shall be wasted, until Asshur shall carry thee away captive.

23. (Alas, who shall live when God doeth this !)

24. And ships shall come from the coast of Chittim, and shall afflict Asshur, and shall afflict Eber, and he also shall perish for ever.

17. **Sheth.** Read as R.V. "sons of tumult," *i.e.* the wild warriors of Moab.

21. **Kenites.** A friendly tribe, of purer faith than most of their neighbours, connected with Midian. Jethro is called a Kenite (Judg i. 16), and Heber (Judg. iv.).

22. **Asshur** = Assyria.

24. **Chittim**—meant primarily Cyprus (Citium), and then any land over the sea to the west of Palestine. **Eber** is a poetic synonym for the Hebrews. **He also . . . ever**, *i.e.* the conqueror of Asshur and Eber, who was to come in ships, would himself also perish. Perhaps the Macedonian power is meant (*cf.* Dan. ii. 38) which conquered Asshur, Eber, etc., in 331 B.C. and the succeeding years.

25. And Balaam rose up, and went and returned to his place : and Balak also went his way.

THE LAST DAYS OF MOSES

Moses had now reached the limit of his life's work. Before his end (1) he and Eleazar the priest ordained Joshua as his successor, and (2) advised that forty-eight cities should be apportioned to the priestly tribe of Levi, of which six were to be cities of refuge, " that the slayer may flee thither which killeth any person at unawares " (Num. xxxv. 11). These six were Kedesh, Shechem, and Hebron, west of Jordan ; Golan, Ramoth-Gilead, and Bezer, east of Jordan. Having then recited his Song and delivered his Blessing, Moses died on Mount Nebo.

THE SONG OF MOSES

Deuteronomy xxxii. 1-43

1. Give ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak ; and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth.
2. My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall

25. Balaam was however subsequently slain by the Hebrew soldiery in the massacre of the Midianites, according to the story of P (see note given above).

1. The object of this poem is to exhibit the goodness and faithfulness of Jehovah as shown in His dealings with a corrupt and ungrateful nation. It is a didactic poem ; that is, it is meant to teach the lesson to be learnt from Israel's past history : and it has been described as a " prophetic meditation " on these past events. As such it is aptly put into the mouth of Moses in his last days. About 630 B.C. is assigned as the date of the Song in its highly finished poetical form. Analysis : (1-3) Introduction ; (4-6) God's faithfulness to His ungrateful people ; (7-14) His providence brought Israel to a blessed country ; (15-18) Israel's ingratitude and lapse into idolatry, which (19-25) had obliged Jehovah to threaten it (26-27) with disaster and almost extinction ; (28-43) but He determined to give them victory, by speaking to them through the extremity of their need and leading them to a better mind. (Dr. *Deut.*, pp. 344 *seq.*)

distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass :

3. Because I will publish the name of the **LORD** : ascribe ye greatness unto our God.

4. He is the Rock, his work is perfect : for all his ways are judgment : a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he.

5. They have corrupted themselves ; *they are not his children, but a blot upon them* : they are a perverse and crooked generation.

6. Do ye thus requite the **LORD**, O foolish people and unwise ? is not he thy father that hath bought thee ? hath he not made thee, and established thee ?

7. Remember the days of old, consider the years of many generations : ask thy father, and he will shew thee ; thy elders, and they will tell thee :

8. "When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel.

9. "For the **LORD**'s portion is his people ; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance.

10. "He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness ; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye.

11. "As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over

5. Means, these wicked men are not Jehovah's true Israel, but a false Israel, a blemish on the true stock.

6. **bought**. Better, "gotten thee, as a father."

8. From here to 14 is the substance of what the elders "tell thee." This verse means, "when God allowed the various nations to settle in separate localities, He so set their bounds as to reserve a home for Israel, adequate to its numbers."

9. **lot**. "When the territories of the nations were divided, Israel fell to Jehovah, and became His allotted portion" (Dr. *Deut.* 356).

her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings :

12. "So the LORD alone did lead him, and there was no strange god with him.

13. "He made him ride on the high places of the earth, that he might eat the increase of the fields ; and he made him to suck honey out of the rock, and oil out of the flinty rock ;

14. "Butter of kine, and milk of sheep, with fat of lambs, and rams of the breed of Bashan, and goats, with the fat of kidneys of wheat ; and thou didst drink the pure blood of the grape."

15. But Jeshurun waxed fat, and kicked : thou art waxen fat, thou art grown thick, thou art covered with fatness ; then he forsook God which made him, and lightly esteemed the Rock of his salvation.

16. They provoked him to jealousy with strange gods, with abominations provoked they him to anger.

17. They sacrificed unto devils, not to God ; to gods whom they knew not, to new gods that came newly up, whom your fathers feared not.

18. Of the Rock that begat thee thou art unmindful, and hast forgotten God that formed thee.

19. And when the LORD saw it, he abhorred them, because of the provoking of his sons, and of his daughters.

20. And he said, I will hide my face from them, I will see what their end shall be : for they are a very froward generation, children in whom is no faith.

14. Lit. "kidney-fat of wheat," a metaphor denoting "most nutritious wheat."

15. Jeshurun = "the upright one," a title of the ideal Israel, here reproachfully applied in contrast to the reality of their wickedness.

kicked = rebelled.

21. They have moved me to jealousy with that which is not God ; they have provoked me to anger with their vanities : and I will move them to jealousy with those which are not a people ; I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation.

22. For a fire is kindled in mine anger, and shall burn unto the lowest hell, and shall consume the earth with her increase, and set on fire the foundations of the mountains.

23. I will heap mischiefs upon them ; I will spend mine arrows upon them.

24. They shall be burnt with hunger, and devoured with burning heat, and with bitter destruction : I will also send the teeth of beasts upon them, with the poison of serpents of the dust.

25. The sword without, and terror within, shall destroy both the young man and the virgin, the suckling also with the man of gray hairs.

26. I said, I would scatter them into corners, I would make the remembrance of them to cease from among men :

27. Were it not that I feared the wrath of the enemy, lest their adversaries should *misdeem*, and lest they should say, Our hand is high, and *it is not* the LORD that hath done all this.

28. For they are a nation void of counsel, neither is there any understanding in them.

29. O that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end !

21. Just as Israel has angered God by worshipping no-gods, *i.e.* idols, so He will vex them by allowing a heathen and senseless nation, unworthy to be called a " people," to win successes against them. The Hebrew contrasts the word " no-god " with its parallel " no-people."

30. How should one chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight, except their Rock had sold them, and the **LORD** had *delivered* them up ?

31. For their rock is not as our Rock, even our enemies themselves being judges.

32. For their vine is of the vine of Sodom, and of the fields of Gomorrah : their grapes are grapes of gall, their clusters are bitter :

33. Their wine is the poison of dragons, and the cruel venom of asps.

34. Is not this laid up in store with me, and sealed up among my treasures ?

35. To me belongeth vengeance, and recompence ; their foot shall slide in due time : for the day of their calamity is at hand, and the things that shall come upon them make haste.

36. For the **LORD** shall judge his people, and repent himself for his servants, when he seeth that their power is gone, and *that neither fettered nor free remaineth*.

37. And he shall say, Where are their gods, their rock in whom they trusted,

38. Which did eat the fat of their sacrifices, and drank the wine of their drink offerings ? let them rise up and help you, and be your protection.

30, 31. Israel's disasters are due, as even their enemies must admit, to Jehovah's alienation, not to the enemies' power.

32, 33. for the enemy's vine, *i.e.* character, is too wicked : they could not have troubled Israel by their own strength.

34. this, *i.e.* the heathen's wickedness, which is as it were stored up by God in His storehouse (treasures) till the day of retribution shall arrive.

35. their, *i.e.* the heathen's. God will, after all, be reconciled and help Israel against the enemy.

37. he = Jehovah. God will see that His people have now repented of their trust in false gods and will rise to help them. In the text here printed both of the Song and the Blessing a few variations from the A.V. have been admitted, printed in italics.

39. See now that I, even I, am he, and there is no god with me : I kill, and I make alive ; I wound, and I heal : neither is there any that can deliver out of my hand.

40. For I lift up my hand to heaven, and say, I live for ever.

41. If I whet my glittering sword, and mine hand take hold on judgment ; I will render vengeance to mine enemies, and will reward them that hate me.

42. I will make mine arrows drunk with blood, with the blood of the slain and of the captives, and my sword shall devour flesh from the *long-haired heads* of the enemy.

43. Rejoice, O ye nations, with his people : for he will avenge the blood of his servants, and will render vengeance to his adversaries, and will be merciful unto his land, and to his people.

THE BLESSING OF MOSES¹

Deuteronomy xxxiii

1. And this is the blessing, wherewith Moses the man of God blessed the children of Israel before his death.

2. And he said, The LORD came from Sinai, and rose up from Seir unto them : he shined forth from mount Paran, and he came with ten thousands of saints : from his right hand went a fiery law for them.

¹ Of this poem the salient features are its buoyant, happy tone ; the glorification of the tribe of Joseph, and, conversely, the depression of Judah ; the absence of any note of condemnation or reproach such as characterises the Song ; Simeon is not included in the benediction. The reader will understand the text if he remembers that the blessing of each tribe bears a close relation to its geographical position and circumstances.

Internal evidence points to the composition of the poem, based on a traditional original, in about 930 B.C. by a writer of the *Northern* Kingdom. Compare and contrast with this the Blessing of Jacob in Gen. xlix.

3. Yea, he loved the people ; all *its* saints are in thy hand : and they sat down at thy feet, *receiving* of thy words.

4. Moses commanded us a law, *a possession for* the congregation of Jacob.

5. And he was king in Jeshurun, when the heads of the people and the tribes of Israel were gathered together.

6. Let Reuben live, and not die ; *but* let his men be few.

7. And this is the blessing of Judah : and he said, Hear, LORD, the voice of Judah, and bring him unto his people : with his hands he contended for it ; and be thou an help to him from his enemies.

8. And of Levi he said, Let thy Thummim and thy Urim be with thy holy one, whom thou didst prove at Massah, and with whom thou didst strive at the waters of Meribah ;

9. Who said *of* his father and his mother, I have not seen him ; neither did he acknowledge his brethren, nor

3. The text is corrupt : it purports to express Jehovah's love for and instruction to Israel. The poet turns abruptly at "all its saints" and addresses Jehovah.

5. *he* = Jehovah. Jeshurun ; see p. 91, note 15.

6. A qualified blessing, corresponding to the historical insignificance and dwindling population of Reuben. Simeon—who, as Leah's second son, would naturally come in here—is passed by. Simeon at an early period was absorbed by Judah and ceased to exist independently. Hence its omission here.

7. *unto his people* = a prayer for reunion after some rupture.

for it, i.e. Judah has justified his desire for reunion by his military services for the common weal.

8. *thy*. Jehovah is addressed : *thy holy one* = the tribe of Levi, the whole of which is here regarded by the poet as having been represented in the person of Moses at Massah and Meribah. In the account of the incidents at those places, however, it was the people who "proved" (or "tempted") and "stroved" with God, not He with them.

9. Explained by Matt. x. 37, Luke xiv. 26, etc.

knew his own children : for they have observed thy word, and kept thy covenant.

10. They shall teach Jacob thy judgments, and Israel thy law : they shall put incense before thee, and whole burnt sacrifice upon thine altar.

11. Bless, **LORD**, his substance, and accept the work of his hands : smite through the loins of them that rise against him, and of them that hate him, that they rise not again.

12. And of Benjamin he said, The beloved of the **LORD** shall dwell in safety by him ; and the **LORD** shall cover him all the day long, and he shall dwell between his shoulders.

13. And of Joseph he said, Blessed of the **LORD** be his land, for the precious things of heaven, for the dew, and for the deep that coucheth beneath.

14. And for the precious fruits brought forth by the sun, and for the precious things put forth by the moon.

15. And for the chief things of the ancient mountains, and for the precious things of the lasting hills,

16. And for the precious things of the earth and fulness thereof, and for the good will of him that dwelt in the bush : let the blessing come upon the head of Joseph, and upon the top of the head of him that was separated from his brethren.

10. They, *i.e.* the Levites, who are the priests of the nation.

12. he shall dwell, *i.e.* Jehovah dwelleth : alluding to the site of the Temple, just within the rocky borders or shoulders of Benjamin.

13-16. for the precious things, etc. = *from* or *with*, denoting the source or the material of the blessings. The deep, etc., *i.e.* the springs which start up from underground.

14. by the moon, *i.e.* the produce yielded by the ground in the successive *months*.

16. in the bush refers to Jehovah appearing in the bush when He spoke to Moses (Exod. iii. 2).

17. *His firstling bullock—it hath majesty, and its horns are horns of a wild-ox*: with them he shall push the people together to the ends of the earth: and they are the ten thousands of Ephraim, and they are the thousands of Manasseh.

18. And of Zebulun he said, Rejoice, Zebulun, in thy going out; and, Issachar, in thy tents.

19. They shall call the people unto the mountain; there they shall offer sacrifices of righteousness: for they shall suck of the abundance of the seas, and of treasures hid in the sand.

20. And of Gad he said, Blessed be he that enlargeth Gad: he dwelleth as a lion, and teareth the arm, *yea* the crown of the head.

21. And he provided *a* first part for himself, because there *a commander's portion was reserved*; and he came with the heads of the people, he executed the justice of the **LORD**, and his judgments with Israel.

22. And of Dan he said, Dan is a lion's whelp, *that leapeth forth* from Bashan.

23. And of Naphtali he said, O Naphtali, satisfied with favour, and full with the blessing of the **LORD**: possess thou the *lake* and the south.

17. Joseph's firstling bullock was Ephraim. **They are**: "The two horns represent the thousands," etc.

18. "in thy tents" is a poetical variant for "thy coming in."

19. Zebulun's territory here and in Jacob's Blessing is spoken of as coming down to the shore. In Joshua's distribution (Josh. xix., from the later authority, P) it is entirely inland. Doubtless the borders of the tribes fluctuated in the course of time.

20. Gad's "enlarger" is God.

21. Gad got a good allotment for himself first, and then came across Jordan to do his duty in helping the other tribes to theirs.

heads, *i.e.* rulers, as in verse 5.

22. *that leapeth*. These words picturesquely describe the lion, not Dan. Bashan was a natural lair for lions.

23. *lake*, *i.e.* the Lake of Chinnereth. The south = the southern parts of Naphtali, facing the sunny south and bordering on the lake.

24. And of Asher he said, Let Asher be blessed with children ; let him be acceptable to his brethren, and let him dip his foot in oil.

25. Thy *bolts* shall be iron and brass ; and as thy days, so shall thy strength be.

26. There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun, who rideth upon the heaven as thy help, and in his excellency on the sky.

27. The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms : and he shall thrust out the enemy from before thee ; and shall say, Destroy them.

28. Israel then shall dwell in safety alone : the fountain of Jacob shall be upon a land of corn and wine ; also his heavens shall drop down dew.

29. Happy art thou, O Israel : who is like unto thee, O people saved by the LORD, the shield of thy help, and the sword of thy excellency ! and thine enemies shall *come cringing* unto thee ; and thou shalt tread upon their high places.

MOSES DIES

Deuteronomy xxxiv. 1-8

1. And Moses went up from the plains of Moab unto the mountain of Nebo, to the top of Pisgah, that is over against Jericho. And the LORD shewed him all the land, even Gilead, unto Dan, 2. and all Naphtali, and the land of Ephraim, and Manasseh, and all the land

25. *Thy bolts*, etc., means, "Defend yourself carefully against foreign aggression from the north." as thy days, etc. = may Asher's strength be maintained as time wears on, instead of being diminished by old age, as is usual with an individual.

27. *arms*, i.e. God puts His arms beneath them to sustain them.

28. *fountain*, i.e. the stream of descendants.

of Judah, unto the utmost sea, 3. and the south, and the plain of the valley of Jericho, the city of palm trees, unto Zoar. 4. And the LORD said unto him, This is the land which I sware unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, saying, I will give it unto thy seed: I have caused thee to see it with thine eyes, but thou shalt not go over thither.

5. So Moses the servant of the LORD died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the LORD. 6. And he buried him in a valley in the land of Moab, over against Beth-peor: but no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day. 7. And Moses was an hundred and twenty years old when he died: his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated. 8. And the children of Israel wept for Moses in the plains of Moab thirty days.

2. *utmost sea* = the Mediterranean.

3. *the south*, *i.e.* the Negeb, the "haggard" tract south of Hebron sloping down past Beersheba. For the view see Dr. *Deut.*, pp. 419 *seq.* and G. A. Smith, *Hist. Geog. of the Holy Land*, pp. 563 *seq.*

6. *he* = either (1) Jehovah, or (2) "one," *i.e.* "he was buried." For apocryphal stories about Moses, see Jude 9, *Murray's I.B.D.*, art. "Moses," etc. The valley (or ravine) where Moses was buried is identified with the ravine of the Wady Zerka-Main or Nahaliel; this is about four miles south of Mount Peor, on the slopes of which stood Beth Peor, "the temple of Peor."

PART IV

THE CONQUEST OF CANAAN

INTRODUCTORY

SOURCES.—Our authority for this period is the book of Joshua (together with the first chapter of Judges), the composition and origin of which, as the concluding portion of the Hexateuch, has been explained, pp. xiii *seq.*

The Country.—Its geography is sketched in the Appendix, p. 207. The inhabitants, now to be subjugated, were :

(A) *Early Main Stocks.* i. *Canaanites.*—This is a *geographical* name : it means the inhabitants of the Canaan, or Lowland. Originally applied by the Egyptians to denote the dwellers on the Phœnician coast, its application was extended to the occupiers of the whole coast-line, and subsequently to all the people west of Jordan.

ii. *Amorites.*—These are the Amurru of the Tel-el-Amarna letters¹ (1400 B.C.). It is a *racial*, not a geographical, appellation. The nation dwelt first in a canton north-east of Palestine, to the rear of Phœnicia, and thence filtered down on both sides of the Jordan. Soon this title like the name Canaanites, grew to be simply a general designation of all the pre-Israelitish population of Palestine. The two names are practically interchangeable for the same people.

iii. *Hivites, Perizzites, Jebusites*, etc., are for the most

¹ In 1888 several tablets were found in the tomb of a royal scribe at Tel-el-Amarna, 160 miles south of Cairo. Written in the Babylonian language, they give a correspondence of the kings and princes of Babylonia, Assyria, and Palestine with the Egyptian kings Amenhotep III. and IV., c. 1400 B.C.

part mere local names for detached sections of the population already described. Jebusite, for instance, generally denotes those Amorites who happened to have occupied the fortress of Jebus (Jerusalem).

All these tribes are Semitic, and akin to their Hebrew conquerors.

(B) *Later Immigrant Stocks.* i. *Hittites.*—Offshoots of this mighty people, whose principal cities were Carchemish on the Euphrates, Kadesh on the Orontes, and Pteria near the Halys, had, even before the patriarchal age, displaced the Amorites, and established themselves in many parts both of Northern and Southern Palestine.¹

ii. *Philistines.*—This sea-faring people of non-Semitic race had, shortly before the Hebrew invasion, settled on the south-west coast and gained possession of the plain. Most likely the Philistines had sailed thither from Crete, which seems to have been one of their chief homes—as it was for many races at the dawn of history. From them comes the title Palestine; for later Greek and Roman invaders, landing on the coast of the Philistine country, applied to the whole land the name of that part with which they had first come in contact.²

In the secular arts, all these inhabitants were in advance of the Hebrew conquerors who displaced them, and who consequently learnt much from them.³

¹ For this most interesting nation see *Bib. Dict.*, *Dr. Gen.*, etc. They appear to be akin more to the Mongols than to Aryans or Semites. Their power lasted from 1600-700 B.C. They left monuments, still undeciphered, all over Western Asia as far as Smyrna. They are frequently mentioned in Egyptian and Assyrian inscriptions, and the oldest treaty in existence is that concluded with them by Ramses II. (1300-1234 B.C.)

² Cf. the accidental spread of the names "Hellenes" and "Græci." (Bury, *History of Greece*, p. 106.)

³ Cf. the manner in which the rude Hellenic tribes invaded Greece and absorbed the fine civilisation of the Ægean and Mycenæan ages.

CONTENTS OF THE BOOK OF JOSHUA 105

The military occupation.—(A) Fall of Jéricho and of Ai; submission of Gibeon; overthrow of Amorites at Beth-horon.

(B) The Hebrew forces were divided, one division being sent south-west, the other north-west. (a) One party overran the south country from Gibeon to Kadesh, and thence westward to Gaza. Caleb took Hebron, and Othniel captured Debir. Jebus (Jerusalem) fell, though perhaps not entirely, into the hands of the warriors of Judah. Our texts give too disjointed and bald a catalogue of these events to be profitably studied in this volume.

(b) Another party, under Joshua, reduced the districts towards Mount Ephraim, and defeated the northern kings at Merom.

(C) Distribution of settlements among the Tribes (see map).

But the country was only partially subdued by the time of Joshua's death: the large cities, cultivated valleys, and maritime plains were still held by the Canaanites, etc. (Judg. i.). Hence the "Judges" presently had to continue the process of conquest locally and at intervals.

Joshua lived in Egypt forty-five years, in the journey forty, in the conquest seven, in rest and civil administration eighteen; total, one hundred and ten years.

He was an Ephraimite; the chosen attendant, friend, and successor of Moses. His name is the same as our Lord's, meaning "God's salvation."¹ Prominent features in Joshua were: (1) Unfailing faith (*sup.*, p. 70, etc.); (2) Courage; (3) Implicit obedience; (4) Generalship: as

¹ His name is translated "Jesus" five times in A.V., three in Apocrypha, and two in N.T. (Acts vii. 45, Heb. iv. 8).

a military leader Joshua stands out in the story as greatly the superior of Moses, though in other respects Moses is by far the finer character. (See also Ecclesiasticus, xlvi. 1-8.)

JOSHUA COMMISSIONED BY GOD

Joshua i. 1-9

1. Now after the death of Moses the servant of the LORD it came to pass, that the LORD spake unto Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' minister, saying, 2. Moses my servant is dead; now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, thou, and all this people, unto the land which I do give to them, even to the children of Israel. 5. There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life: as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee. 9. Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the LORD thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.

MARCH OF THE ARMY TO AND OVER JORDAN

Joshua iii. 14-17; iv. 18

iii. 14. And it came to pass, when the people removed from their tents, to pass over Jordan, and the priests bearing the ark of the covenant before the people; 15. and as they that bare the ark were come unto Jordan, and the feet of the priests that bare the ark were dipped in the brim of the water, (for Jordan overfloweth all his banks all the time of harvest,) 16. that the waters which came down from above stood and rose up upon an heap ^a

^a5. "Sayce mentions that a parallel phenomenon is recorded by an Arabic historian as having happened in A.D. 1267, when the river was suddenly dammed up by a landslip." (Ott., p. 84.)

great way off, at Adam, the city that is beside Zaretan: and those that came down toward the sea of the plain, even the salt sea, failed, and were cut off: and the people passed over right against Jericho. 17. *And the priests that bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD stood firm on dry ground in the midst of Jordan, and all the Israelites passed over on dry ground, until all the people were passed clean over Jordan.* iv. 18. *And it came to pass, when the priests that bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD were come up out of the midst of Jordan, and the soles of the priests' feet were lifted up unto the dry land, that the waters of Jordan returned unto their place, and flowed over all his banks, as they did before.*

THE CAPTAIN OF JEHOVAH'S HOST

Joshua v. 13-15

13. *And it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted up his eyes and looked, and, behold, there stood a man over against him with his sword drawn in his hand: and Joshua went unto him, and said unto him, Art thou for us, or for our adversaries?* 14. *And he said, Nay; but as captain of the host of the LORD am I now come.* And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and did worship, and said unto him, *What saith my lord unto his servant?* 15. *And the captain of the LORD's host said unto Joshua, Loose thy shoe from off thy foot; for the place whereon thou standest is holy.* And Joshua did so.

18. The priests stood with the Ark in the river-bed until all the people had passed, and came out last.

After crossing the river Joshua set up a commemorative cairn of stones at his new camp of Gilgal. Here the rite of circumcision was enforced on all his followers, having apparently been neglected, and the Passover festival was held. Our records also report the cessation of the manna after this event.

THE CAPTURE OF JERICHO

Joshua ii. and vi

Two spies had been sent out before the force crossed Jordan.—ii. 1. And Joshua the son of Nun sent out two men to spy secretly, saying, Go view the land, even Jericho. And they went, and came into an harlot's house, named Rahab, and lodged there. 2. And it was told the king of Jericho, saying, Behold, there came men in hither to night of the children of Israel to search out the country. 3. And the king of Jericho sent unto Rahab, saying, Bring forth the men that are come to thee, which are entered into thine house: for they be come to search out all the country. 4. And the woman took the two men, and hid them, and said thus, There came men unto me, but I wist not whence they were: 5. and it came to pass about the time of shutting of the gate, when it was dark, that the men went out: whither the men went I wot not: pursue after them quickly; for ye shall overtake them. 6. But she had brought them up to the roof of the house, and hid them with the stalks of flax, which she had laid in order upon the roof. 7. And the men pursued after them the way to Jordan unto the fords: and as soon as they which pursued after them were gone out, they shut the gate.

Rahab exacts a promise from the spies, for saving them.—8. And before they were laid down, she came up unto them upon the roof; 9. and she said unto the men, I know that the LORD hath given you the land. 12. Now therefore, I pray you, swear unto me by the LORD, since I have shewed you kindness, that ye will also shew kindness unto my

6. The stalks of the flax plant, after being steeped in the river, were laid out to dry (sometimes on the roof, as here) before being peeled and having the fibres separated.

father's house, and give me a true token : 13. and that ye will save alive my father, and my mother, and my brethren, and my sisters, and all that they have, and deliver our lives from death. 14. And the men answered her, Our life for yours, if ye utter not this our business. And it shall be, when the LORD hath given us the land, that we will deal kindly and truly with thee.

They escape.—15. Then she let them down by a cord through the window : for her house was upon the town-wall, and she dwelt upon the wall. 16. And she said unto them, Get you to the mountain, lest the pursuers meet you ; and hide yourselves there three days, until the pursuers be returned : and afterward may ye go your way. 17. And the men said unto her, 18. Behold, when we come into the land, thou shalt bind this line of scarlet thread in the window which thou didst let us down by : and thou shalt bring thy father, and thy mother, and thy brethren, and all thy father's household, home unto thee. 19. And it shall be, that whosoever shall go out of the doors of thy house into the street, his blood shall be upon his head, and we will be guiltless : and whosoever shall be with thee in the house, his blood shall be on our head, if any hand be upon him. 20. And if thou utter this our business, then we will be quit of thine oath which thou hast made us to swear. 21. And she said, According unto your words, so be it. And she sent them away, and they departed : and she bound the scarlet line in the window. 22. And they went, and came unto the mountain, and abode there three days, until the pursuers were returned :

12. *true token*, *i.e.* "a pledge of your good faith."

16. In order to elude pursuit the spies went off into the hills *west* of Jericho, just opposite to their real direction, which would have been back to their camp, eastwards.

and the pursuers sought them throughout all the way, but found them not.

And report to Joshua.—23. So the two men returned, and descended from the mountain, and passed over, and came to Joshua the son of Nun, and told him all things that befell them: 24. and they said unto Joshua, Truly the LORD hath delivered into our hands all the land; for even all the inhabitants of the country do faint because of us.

Joshua receives the Divine instructions.—vi. 1. Now Jericho was straitly shut up because of the children of Israel: none went out, and none came in. 2. And the LORD said unto Joshua, See, I have given into thine hand Jericho, and the king thereof, and the mighty men of valour. 3. And ye shall compass the city, all ye men of war, and go round about the city once. Thus shalt thou do six days. 4. And seven priests shall bear before the ark seven trumpets of rams' horns: and the seventh day ye shall compass the city seven times, and the priests shall blow with the trumpets. 5. And it shall come to pass, that when they make a long blast with the ram's horn, and when ye hear the sound of the trumpet, all the people shall shout with a great shout; and the wall of the city shall fall down flat, and the people shall ascend up every man straight before him.

Procession round the city.—8. And it came to pass, when Joshua had spoken unto the people, that the seven priests bearing the seven trumpets of rams' horns passed on before the LORD, and blew with the trumpets: and the

22. Rahab's action was claimed by New Testament writers alike as an exhibition of "faith" (Heb. xi. 31) and of "works" (Jas. ii. 25).

ark of the covenant of the LORD followed them. 9. And the armed men went before the priests that blew with the trumpets, and the rereward came after the ark, the priests going on, and blowing with the trumpets. 10. And Joshua had commanded the people, saying, Ye shall not shout, nor make any noise with your voice, neither shall any word proceed out of your mouth, until the day I bid you shout ; then shall ye shout. 11. So the ark of the LORD compassed the city, going about it once : and they came into the camp, and lodged in the camp.

Repeated six times.—14. And the second day they compassed the city once, and returned into the camp : so they did six days. 15. And it came to pass on the seventh day, that they rose early about the dawning of the day, and compassed the city after the same manner seven times : only on that day they compassed the city seven times. 16. And it came to pass at the seventh time, when the priests blew with the trumpets, Joshua said unto the people, Shout ; for the LORD hath given you the city. 17. And the city shall be accursed, even it, and all that are therein, to the LORD : only Rahab the harlot shall live, she and all that are with her in the house, because she hid the messengers that we sent. 18. And ye, in any wise keep yourselves from the accursed thing, lest ye make yourselves accursed, when ye take of the accursed thing, and make the camp of Israel a curse, and trouble it. 19. But all the silver, and gold, and vessels of brass and iron, are consecrated unto the LORD : they shall come into the treasury of the LORD.

18. The seventeenth-century language, "accursed thing," presents a wholly false meaning to our modern ears. The Heb. simply means "the things devoted to God, and therefore not to be used by us at all."

Destruction of the city.—20. So the people shouted when the priests blew with the trumpets : and it came to pass, when the people heard the sound of the trumpet, and the people shouted with a great shout, that the wall fell down flat, so that the people went up into the city, every man straight before him, and they took the city. 21. And they utterly destroyed all that was in the city, both man and woman, young and old, and ox, and sheep, and ass, with the edge of the sword. 22. But Joshua had said unto the two men that had spied out the country, Go into the harlot's house, and bring out thence the woman, and all that she hath, as ye sware unto her. 23. And the young men that were spies went in, and brought out Rahab, and her father, and her mother, and her brethren, and all that she had ; and they brought out all her kindred, and left them without the camp of Israel. 24. And they burnt the city with fire, and all that was therein : only the silver, and the gold, and the vessels of brass and of iron, they put into the treasury of the house of the LORD.

vi. 20. (1) It is not altogether impossible, even in this critical and scientific age, to accept this story literally. The destructive effect upon material structures of the vibrations in the atmosphere caused by an appalling noise are perfectly familiar. Conceivably a breach in the weaker portions of the wall may have been caused by this means, a result magnified by subsequent repetition into the statement of the text. (2) It is generally held, however, that this is an instance of "a graphic figure of speech having become hardened into a circumstantial narrative," the meaning being that the city yielded at the first onset (*cf.* the Gk. metaphorical adverb *αὐτοβοέι*). Jericho indeed—low-lying, luxurious, in an enervating climate and exposed situation—has always in history fallen an easy prey to assault. Therefore "that her walls fell down at the sound of Joshua's trumpets is no exaggeration, but the soberest summary of all her history" (G. A. Smith). (3) As in the story of Naaman, the moral lesson conveyed is that of the happy results of a patient submission of our own proud and impetuous methods of procedure to the divine bidding. Natural impulse suggested a military assault ; faith counselled a humble reliance on God ; and the latter won.

25. And Joshua saved Rahab the harlot alive, and her father's household, and all that she had ; and she dwelleth in Israel even unto this day ; because she hid the messengers, which Joshua sent to spy out Jericho.

Joshua's curse on its site.—26. And Joshua adjured them at that time, saying, Cursed be the man before the **LORD**, that riseth up and buildeth this city Jericho : he shall lay the foundation thereof in his firstborn, and in his youngest son shall he set up the gates of it.

CAPTURE OF AI

Joshua vii. and viii

vii. 1. But the children of Israel committed a trespass in the accursed thing : for Achan, of the tribe of Judah, took of the accursed thing : and the anger of the **LORD** was kindled against the children of Israel.

Failure of the first attempt.—2. And Joshua sent men from Jericho to Ai, which is beside Beth-aven, on the east side of Beth-el, and spake unto them, saying, Go up and view the country. And the men went up and viewed Ai. 3. And they returned to Joshua, and said unto him, Let not all the people go up ; but let about two or three

25. *she dwelleth . . . this day, i.e. her descendants were still dwelling among the Hebrews when the writer composed his narrative.* Rahab married Salmon, of Judah, and became mother of Boaz, who married Ruth. Rahab was thus ancestress of David, and so of Christ.

26. The curse was fulfilled in the reign of Ahab (1 Kings xvi. 34) ; but the place seems to have been inhabited again long before that date.

After the fall of Jericho the next enterprise was naturally directed against the high central ridge west of Jericho, the possession of which would give an invading general freedom to extend in any direction he pleased. Joshua still made Gilgal his central camp, and continued to do so throughout the campaign.

2. *Ai is about twelve miles west-north-west of Jericho.*

thousand men go up and smite Ai; and make not all the people to labour thither; for they are but few. 4. So there went up thither of the people about three thousand men: and they fled before the men of Ai. 5. And the men of Ai smote of them about thirty and six men: wherefore the hearts of the people melted, and became as water.

[At God's command Joshua cast the lot and discovered Achan's guilt.]

And its cause.—19. And Joshua said unto Achan, My son, give, I pray thee, glory to the LORD God of Israel, and make confession unto him; and tell me now what thou hast done; hide it not from me. 20. And Achan answered Joshua, and said, Indeed I have sinned against the LORD God of Israel, and thus and thus have I done: 21. when I saw among the spoils a goodly Babylonish garment, and two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold of fifty shekels weight, then I coveted them, and took them; and, behold, they are hid in the earth in the midst of my tent, and the silver under it.

Achan's punishment.—22. So Joshua sent messengers, and they ran unto the tent; and, behold, it was hid in his tent, and the silver under it. 23. And they took them out of the midst of the tent, and brought them unto Joshua: 24. and Joshua, and all Israel with him, took Achan and the silver, and the garment, and the wedge of gold, and his sons, and his daughters, and his oxen, and his asses, and his sheep, and his tent, and all that he had: and they brought them unto the valley of Achor. 25. And Joshua said, Why hast thou troubled us? the LORD shall trouble thee this day. And all Israel stoned him with stones, and burned them with fire, after they had stoned them with stones. 26. And they raised over him a great heap of

stones unto this day. So the LORD turned from the fierceness of his anger.

viii. 1. And the LORD said unto Joshua, Fear not, neither be thou dismayed: take all the people of war with thee, and arise, go up to Ai: see, I have given into thy hand the king of Ai, and his people, and his city, and his land: 2. and thou shalt do to Ai and her king as thou didst unto Jericho and her king: only the spoil thereof, and the cattle thereof, shall ye take for a prey unto yourselves: lay thee an ambush for the city behind it.

The second attempt: an ambush.—10. And Joshua rose up early in the morning, and numbered the people, and went up, he and the elders of Israel, before the people to Ai. 11. And all the people, even the people of war that were with him, went up, and drew nigh, and came before the city, and pitched on the north side of Ai: now there was a valley between them and Ai. 12. And he took about five thousand men, and set them to lie in ambush between Beth-el and Ai, on the west side of the city. 13. And when they had set the people, even all the host that was on the north of the city, and their liers in wait on the west of the city, Joshua went that night into the midst of the valley.

The engagement.—14. And it came to pass, when the king of Ai saw it, that they hasted and rose up early, and the men of the city went out against Israel to battle, he and all his people, at a time appointed, before the plain; but he wist not that there were liers in ambush against him behind the city. 15. And Joshua and all Israel made as

10. Verses 3-9 (here omitted) contain apparently a duplicate version of the affair, in which an ambush of 30,000 men is set—a number impossibly large for the purpose. Clear traces of a duplicate account appear also throughout the rest of the chapter.

if they were beaten before them, and fled by the way of the wilderness. 16. And all the people that were in Ai were called together to pursue after them: and they pursued after Joshua, and were drawn away from the city. 17. And there was not a man left in Ai or Beth-el, that went not out after Israel: and they left the city open, and pursued after Israel. 18. And the LORD said unto Joshua, Stretch out the spear that is in thy hand toward Ai; for I will give it into thine hand. And Joshua stretched out the spear that he had in his hand toward the city. 19. And the ambush arose quickly out of their place, and they ran as soon as he had stretched out his hand: and they entered into the city, and took it, and hasted and set the city on fire.

Victory of Israel.—20. And when the men of Ai looked behind them, they saw, and, behold, the smoke of the city ascended up to heaven, and they had no power to flee this way or that way: and the people that fled to the wilderness turned back upon the pursuers. 21. And when Joshua and all Israel saw that the ambush had taken the city, and that the smoke of the city ascended, then they turned again, and slew the men of Ai. 22. And the other issued out of the city against them; so they were in the midst of Israel, some on this side, and some on that side: and they smote them, so that they let none of them remain or escape. 23. And the king of Ai they took alive, and brought him to Joshua. 24. And it came to pass, when Israel had made an end of slaying all the inhabitants of Ai in the field, in the wilderness wherein they chased them, and when they were all fallen on the edge of

15. The wilderness of Beth-aven, towards which they pretended to flee, lay to the north of Ai.

the sword, until they were consumed, that all the Israelites returned unto Ai, and smote it with the edge of the sword.

Ai is burnt.—25. And so it was, that all that fell that day, both of men and women, were twelve thousand, even all the men of Ai. 26. For Joshua drew not his hand back, wherewith he stretched out the spear, until he had utterly destroyed all the inhabitants of Ai. 27. Only the cattle and the spoil of that city Israel took for a prey unto themselves, according unto the word of the LORD which he commanded Joshua. 28. And Joshua burnt Ai, and made it an heap for ever, even a desolation unto this day. 29. And the king of Ai he hanged on a tree until eventide: and as soon as the sun was down, Joshua commanded that they should take his carcase down from the tree, and cast it at the entering of the gate of the city, and raise thereon a great heap of stones, that remaineth unto this day.

SUCCESSFUL RUSE OF A CONFEDERACY OF HIVITE CITIES,
LED BY GIBEON

Joshua ix. 3-27

3. And when the inhabitants of Gibeon heard what Joshua had done unto Jericho and to Ai, 4. they did work wily, and went and made as if they had been ambassadors, and took old sacks upon their asses, and wine bottles, old, and rent, and bound up; 5. and old shoes and clouted upon their feet, and old garments upon them;

29. The moral effect of these two victories is seen in the submission of Gibeon, which followed.

3. **Gibeon** was seven miles south-west of Ai and six miles north of Jerusalem, an important position commanding the pass of Beth-horon, on the route from Jordan to the coast. The other Hivite cities in the plot were a few miles away (below, verse 17).

5. **clouted** = patched.

and all the bread of their provision was dry and mouldy.

6. And they went to Joshua unto the camp at Gilgal, and said unto him, and to the men of Israel, We be come from a far country: now therefore make ye a league with us.

7. And the men of Israel said unto the Hivites, Peradventure ye dwell among us; and how shall we make a league with you? 8. And they said unto Joshua, We are thy servants. And Joshua said unto them, Who are ye? and from whence come ye? 9. And they said unto him, From a very far country thy servants are come because of the name of the LORD thy God: for we have heard the fame of him, and all that he did in Egypt. 10. And all that he did to the two kings of the Amorites, that were beyond Jordan, to Sihon king of Heshbon, and to Og king of Bashan. 11. Wherefore our elders and all the inhabitants of our country spake to us, saying, Take victuals with you for the journey, and go to meet them, and say unto them, We are your servants: therefore now make ye a league with us. 12. This our bread we took hot for our provision out of our houses on the day we came forth to go unto you; but now, behold, it is dry, and it is mouldy: 13. and these bottles of wine, which we filled, were new; and, behold, they be rent: and these our garments and our shoes are become old by reason of the very long journey.

14. And the men took of their victuals, and asked not counsel at the mouth of the LORD. 15. And Joshua made peace with them, and made a league with them, to let them live: and the princes of the congregation sware unto them.

Their deceit is discovered.—16. And it came to pass at the end of three days after they had made a league with them, that they heard that they were their neighbour;

and that they dwelt among them. 17. And the children of Israel journeyed, and came unto their cities on the third day. Now their cities were Gibeon, and Cephirah, and Beeroth, and Kirjath-jearim. 18. And the children of Israel smote them not, because the princes of the congregation had sworn unto them by the LORD God of Israel. And all the congregation murmured against the princes. 19. But all the princes said unto all the congregation, We have sworn unto them by the LORD God of Israel : now therefore we may not touch them. 20. This we will do to them ; we will even let them live, lest wrath be upon us, because of the oath which we sware unto them. 21. And the princes said unto them, Let them live ; but let them be hewers of wood and drawers of water unto all the congregation ; as the princes had promised them.

Their humiliation.—22. And Joshua called for them, and he spake unto them, saying, Wherefore have ye beguiled us, saying, We are very far from you ; when ye dwell among us ? 23. Now therefore ye are cursed, and there shall none of you be freed from being bondmen, and hewers of wood and drawers of water for the house of my God. 24. And they answered Joshua, and said, Because it was certainly told thy servants, how that the LORD thy God commanded his servant Moses to give you all the land, and to destroy all the inhabitants of the land from before you, therefore we were sore afraid of our lives because of you, and have done this thing. 25. And now, behold, we are in thine hand : as it seemeth good and right unto thee to do unto us, do. 26. And so did he unto them, and delivered them out of the hand of the children of Israel, that they slew them not. 27. And Joshua made them

that day hewers of wood and drawers of water for the congregation, and for the altar of the LORD, even unto this day, in the place which he should choose.

THE BATTLE OF BETH-HORON

Joshua x. 1-27

1. Now it came to pass, when Adoni-zedec king of Jerusalem had heard how Joshua had taken Ai, and had utterly destroyed it ; as he had done to Jericho and her king, so he had done to Ai and her king ; and how the inhabitants of Gibeon had made peace with Israel, and were among them ; 2. that they feared greatly, because Gibeon was a great city, as one of the royal cities, and because it was greater than Ai, and all the men thereof were mighty. 3. Wherefore Adoni-zedec king of Jerusalem sent unto Hoham king of Hebron, and unto Piram king of Jarmuth, and unto Japhia king of Lachish, and unto Debir king of Eglon, saying, 4. Come up unto me, and help me, that we may smite Gibeon : for it hath made peace with Joshua and with the children of Israel. 5. Therefore the five kings of the Amorites, the king of Jerusalem, the king of Hebron, the king of Jarmuth, the king of Lachish, the king of Eglon, gathered themselves together, and went up, they and all their hosts, and encamped before Gibeon, and made war against it.

Gibeon appeals for aid to Joshua.—6. And the men of Gibeon sent unto Joshua to the camp of Gilgal, saying; Slack not thy hand from thy servants ; come up to us quickly, and save us, and help us : for all the kings of the

27. in the place, etc., must mean " wherever Joshua should eventually decide to set up the Sanctuary," i.e. Shiloh.

3. The three last-mentioned places are on the borders of Philistia, south and south-west of Jerusalem : see map.

Amorites that dwell in the mountains are gathered together against us. 7. So Joshua ascended from Gilgal, he, and all the people of war with him, and all the mighty men of valour.

The battle.—8. And the LORD said unto Joshua, Fear them not: for I have delivered them into thine hand; there shall not a man of them stand before thee. 9. Joshua therefore came unto them suddenly, and went up from Gilgal all night. 10. And the LORD discomfited them before Israel, and slew them with a great slaughter at Gibeon, and chased them along the way that goeth up to Beth-horon, and smote them to Azekah, and unto Makkedah. 11. And it came to pass, as they fled from before Israel, and were in the going down of Beth-horon, that the LORD cast down great stones from heaven upon them unto Azekah, and they died: they were more which died with hailstones than they whom the children of Israel slew with the sword.

The sun stayed.—12. Then spake Joshua to the LORD in the day when the LORD delivered up the Amorites before the children of Israel, and he said in the sight of Israel, Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon; and thou, Moon, in the valley of Ajalon. 13. And the sun stood still, and the moon stayed, until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies. Is not this written in the book of Jasher? So the sun stood still in the midst of heaven,

10. *I.e.* Joshua drove them westwards to the Shephelah (Appendix I).

12. See the similar prayer in Iliad II. 412.

13. *Jasher, i.e.* "The Upright" (*cf.* Jeshurun, p. 91). The book was probably a collection of ballads recounting the mighty deeds of Hebrew heroes. It is not difficult to picture the original circumstances under which Joshua uttered his prayer, the fulfilment of which was clearly regarded by the biographer as a miracle (verses 13, 14). Joshua had marched from Gilgal, all night. By excellent marching up the hill-passes he had covered the twenty or more miles to Gibeon, and was just delivering his surprise attack on the enemy

and hasted not to go down about a whole day. 14. And there was no day like that before it or after it, that the LORD hearkened unto the voice of a man: for the LORD fought for Israel.

Flight of the kings.—16. But these five kings fled, and hid themselves in a cave at Makkedah. 17. And it was told Joshua, saying, The five kings are found hid in a cave at Makkedah. 18. And Joshua said, Roll great stones upon the mouth of the cave, and set men by it for to keep them: 19. and stay ye not, but pursue after your enemies, and smite the hindmost of them; suffer them not to enter into their cities: for the LORD your God hath delivered them into your hand. 20. And it came to pass, when Joshua and the children of Israel had made an end of slaying them with a very great slaughter, till they were consumed, that the rest which remained of them entered into fenced cities.

Their execution.—21. And all the people returned to the camp to Joshua at Makkedah in peace: none moved his tongue against any of the children of Israel. 22. Then said Joshua, Open the mouth of the cave, and bring out those five kings unto me out of the cave. 23. And they did so, and brought forth five kings unto him out of the cave, the king of Jerusalem, the king of Hebron, the king

in the darkness, when, to his dismay, he began to discern the glimmer of dawn in the east. Daylight would assist the enemy to escape; the darkness was on Joshua's side. (He was now to the west of Gibeon, in the upper part of the Beth-horon pass. Looking back towards Gibeon eastwards, he saw the sky over Gibeon beginning to grow light with the sun's approach. He uttered a prayer that the sun might not rise till his victory was complete. Then, looking west down the ravine, which opens lower down into the valley of Ajalon, he saw the full moon ready to sink behind the valley in the sea, and prayed that she might not complete her setting until he had achieved his end.

21. *none moved*, i.e. all stood in awe of the victorious forces (cf. Exod. xi. 7).

of Jarmuth, the king of Lachish, and the king of Eglon. 24. And it came to pass, when they brought out those kings unto Joshua, that Joshua called for all the men of Israel, and said unto the captains of the men of war which went with him, Come near, put your feet upon the necks of these kings. And they came near, and put their feet upon the necks of them. 25. And Joshua said unto them, Fear not, nor be dismayed, be strong and of good courage: for thus shall the **LORD** do to all your enemies against whom ye fight. 26. And afterward Joshua smote them, and slew them, and hanged them on five trees: and they were hanging upon the trees until the evening. 27. And it came to pass at the time of the going down of the sun, that Joshua commanded, and they took them down off the trees, and cast them into the cave wherein they had been hid, and laid great stones in the cave's mouth, which remain until this very day.

DEFEAT OF THE NORTHERN CONFEDERACY

Joshua xi. 1-14

1. And it came to pass, when Jabin king of Hazor had heard those things, that he sent to [all the neighbouring kings from Mount Carmel to Mount Hermon]. 4. And they went out, they and all their hosts with them, much people, even as the sand that is upon the sea shore in multitude, with horses and chariots very many. 5. And when all these kings were met together, they came and pitched together at the waters of Merom, to fight against Israel.

Rout of the enemy.—6. And the **LORD** said unto Joshua,

27. For the further conquest of the South, see above, p. 105.

1. **Jabin.** Perhaps is a title, not a proper name: *cp.* Judg. iv. 2.
2. **Hazor.** The site is uncertain; somewhere in Naphtali, to the west of Lake Merom.

Be not afraid because of them: for to morrow about this time will I deliver them up all slain before Israel: thou shalt hough their horses, and burn their chariots with fire.

7. So Joshua came, and all the people of war with him, against them by the waters of Merom suddenly; and they fell upon them. 8. And the LORD delivered them into the hand of Israel, who smote them, and chased them unto great Zidon, and unto Misrephoth-maim, and unto the valley of Mizpeh eastward; and they smote them, until they left them none remaining. 9. And Joshua did unto them as the LORD bade him; he houghed their horses, and burnt their chariots with fire. 10. And Joshua at that time turned back, and took Hazor, and smote the king thereof with the sword: for Hazor beforetime was the head of all those kingdoms. 11. And they smote all the souls that were therein with the edge of the sword, utterly destroying them: there was not any left to breathe: and he burnt Hazor with fire. 12. And all the cities of those kings, and all the kings of them, did Joshua take, and smote them with the edge of the sword, and he utterly destroyed them, as Moses the servant of the LORD commanded. 13. But as for the cities that stood on their mounds, Israel burned none of them, save Hazor only; that did Joshua burn. 14. And all the spoil of these cities, and the cattle, the children of Israel took for a prey unto themselves; but every man they smote with the edge of the sword, until they had destroyed them, neither left they any to breathe.

6. **hough** = to cut the ham-strings, or sinews joining hip to trunk.

8. **Misrephoth-maim**, near Sidon; probably identical with Sarepta (Luke iv. 26, etc.). **Mizpeh**, north-east of Merom, at the foot of Mt. Hermon.

13. stood . . . mounds, *i.e.* the hill-cities.

ASSEMBLY OF THE ISRAELITES AFTER THE DISTRIBUTION
OF TERRITORY

Joshua xviii. 1; viii. 30-5

(1) *At Shiloh*.—xviii. 1. And the whole congregation of the children of Israel assembled together at Shiloh, and set up the tabernacle of the congregation there. And the land was subdued before them.

(2) *Near Shechem*.—viii. 30. Then Joshua built an altar unto the LORD God of Israel in mount Ebal, 31. as Moses the servant of the LORD commanded the children of Israel, as it is written in the book of the law of Moses, an altar of whole stones, over which no man hath lift up any iron: and they offered thereon burnt offerings unto the LORD, and sacrificed peace offerings. 32. And he wrote there upon the stones a copy of the law of Moses, which he wrote in the presence of the children of Israel. 33. And all Israel, and their elders, and officers, and their judges, stood on this side the ark and on that side before the priests the Levites, which bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD, as well the stranger, as he that was born among them; half of them over against mount Gerizim, and half of them over against mount Ebal; as Moses the servant of the LORD had commanded before, that they

1. For the apportionment of the conquered country the reader should consult a map which is based on the arrangements detailed in Josh. xvi. *seq.* See map at end of this volume.

Shiloh was a natural meeting-place, being in the centre of the land. Furthermore, it was in the territory of Ephraim, Joshua's own tribe, the tribe which was clearly the leader of them all in those days.

33. The remarkable distance which sound carries in the valley between Ebal and Gerizim is again illustrated in Judg. ix. 7, where Jotham recites his fable. It has frequently been observed also by modern travellers.

should bless the people of Israel. 34. And afterward he read all the words of the law, the blessings and cursings, according to all that is written in the book of the law. 35. There was not a word of all that Moses commanded, which Joshua read not before all the congregation of Israel, with the women, and the little ones, and the strangers that were conversant among them.

DEPARTURE OF THE TRANS-JORDANIC TRIBES

Joshua xxii

1. Then Joshua called the Reubenites, and the Gadites, and the half tribe of Manasseh, 6. and blessed them, and sent them away: and they went unto their tents. 9. And the children of Reuben and the children of Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh returned and departed from the children of Israel out of Shiloh, which is in the land of Canaan, to go unto the country of Gilead, to the land of their possession, whereof they were possessed, according to the word of the **LORD** by the hand of Moses. 10. And when they came unto the borders of Jordan, that are in the land of Canaan, they built there an altar by Jordan, a great altar to see to.

The other tribes suspect the altar.—11. And the children of Israel heard say, Behold, the children of Reuben and the children of Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh have built an altar over against the land of Canaan, in the borders of Jordan, at the passage of the children of Israel. 12. And when the children of Israel heard of it, the whole

34. The exact method of this recitation was given by Moses, in the form of an anticipatory command, in Deut. xxvii. ; our Prayer-book retains much of it in the first part of the Commination Service for Ash Wednesday.

35. Here, at Shechem, they buried Joseph's remains, which they had carried up with them from Egypt (Josh. xxiv. 32).

congregation of the children of Israel gathered themselves together at Shiloh, to go up to war against them. 13. And the children of Israel sent unto them, into the land of Gilead, Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest, 14. and with him ten princes, of each chief house a prince throughout all the tribes of Israel ; and each one was an head of the house of their fathers among the thousands of Israel.

The mission of Phinehas.—15. And they came unto the children of Reuben, and to the children of Gad, and to the half tribe of Manasseh, unto the land of Gilead, and they spake with them, saying, 16. Thus saith the whole congregation of the LORD, What trespass is this that ye have committed against the God of Israel, to turn away this day from following the LORD, in that ye have builded you an altar, that ye might rebel this day against the LORD ? 17. Is the iniquity of Peor too little for us, from which we are not cleansed until this day, although there was a plague in the congregation of the LORD, 18. but that ye must turn away this day from following the LORD ? and it will be, seeing ye rebel to day against the LORD, that to morrow he will be wroth with the whole congregation of Israel. 19. Notwithstanding, if the land of your possession be unclean, then pass ye over unto the land of the possession of the LORD, wherein the LORD's tabernacle dwelleth, and take possession among us : but rebel not against the LORD, nor rebel against us, in building you an altar beside the altar of the LORD our God. 20. Did not Achan the son of Zerah commit a trespass in the accursed thing, and wrath fell on all the con-

17. Peor, *i.e.* Baal-Peor (the lord of Peor) the Moabite deity into whose licentious worship the Hebrews had been inveigled (above p. 81 *n.*).

gregation of Israel ? and that man perished not alone in his iniquity.

He is reassured.—21. Then the children of Reuben and the children of Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh answered, and said unto the heads of the thousands of Israel, 22. The LORD God of gods, the LORD God of gods, he knoweth, and Israel he shall know : if it be in rebellion, or if in transgression against the LORD, (save thou us not this day,) 23. that we have built us an altar to turn from following the LORD, or if to offer thereon burnt offering or meat offering, or if to offer peace offerings thereon, let the LORD himself require it : 24. and if we have not rather done it for fear of this thing, saying, In time to come your children might speak unto our children, saying, What have ye to do with the LORD God of Israel ? 25. For the LORD hath made Jordan a border between us and you, ye children of Reuben and children of Gad : ye have no part in the LORD : so shall your children make our children cease from fearing the LORD. 26. Therefore we said, Let us now prepare to build us an altar, not for burnt offering, nor for sacrifice : 27. but that it may be a witness between us, and you, and our generations after us, that we might do the service of the LORD before him with our burnt offerings, and with our sacrifices, and with our peace offerings : that your children may not say to our children in time to come, Ye have no part in the LORD. 28. Therefore said we, that it shall be, when they should so say to us or to our generations in time to come, that we may say again, Behold the pattern of the altar of the LORD, which our fathers made, not for burnt offerings, nor for sacrifices ; but it is a witness between us and you. 29. God forbid that we should rebel against the LORD, and turn this

day from following the LORD, to build an altar for burnt offerings, for meat offerings, or for sacrifices, beside the altar of the LORD our God that is before his tabernacle.

Phinehas comforts them.—30. And when Phinehas the priest, and the princes of the congregation and heads of the thousands of Israel which were with him, heard the words that the children of Reuben and the children of Gad and the children of Manasseh spake, it pleased them. 31. And Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest said unto them, This day we perceive that the LORD is among us, because ye have not committed this trespass against the LORD: now ye have delivered the children of Israel out of the hand of the LORD.

And reports to the Israelites.—32. And Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest, and the princes, returned out of the land of Gilead, unto the land of Canaan, to the children of Israel, and brought them word again. 33. And the thing pleased the children of Israel; and the children of Israel blessed God, and did not intend to go up against them in battle, to destroy the land wherein the children of Reuben and Gad dwelt. 34. And the children of Reuben and the children of Gad called the altar Ed: for it shall be a witness between us that the LORD is God.

THE END OF JOSHUA

Joshua xxiii. 1-14 and xxiv. 29-31

xxiii. 1. And it came to pass a long time after that the LORD had given rest unto Israel from all their enemies round

34. **Ed** = Witness.

1. According to the dates indicated by the sacred text, Joshua lived for eighteen years after the battle of Beth-horon.

The "rest" was only a partial one—Heb. iv. 8, etc.; and *cp.* Josh. xiii. 1: "There remaineth yet very much land to be possessed."

about, that Joshua waxed old and stricken in age. 2. And Joshua called for all Israel, and for their elders, and for their heads, and for their judges, and for their officers, and said unto them, I am old and stricken in age: 3. and ye have seen all that the LORD your God hath done unto all these nations because of you; for the LORD your God is he that hath fought for you. 4. Behold, I have divided unto you by lot these nations that remain, to be an inheritance for your tribes, from Jordan, with all the nations that I have cut off, even unto the great sea westward. 5. And the LORD your God, he shall expel them from before you, and drive them from out of your sight; and ye shall possess their land, as the LORD your God hath promised unto you.

He appeals to his people.—6. Be ye therefore very courageous to keep and to do all that is written in the book of the law of Moses, that ye turn not aside therefrom to the right hand or to the left; 7. that ye come not among these nations, these that remain among you; neither make mention of the name of their gods, nor cause to swear by them, neither serve them, nor bow yourselves unto them: 8. but cleave unto the LORD your God, as ye have done unto this day. 9. For the LORD hath driven out from before you great nations and strong; but as for you, no man hath been able to stand before you unto this day. 10. One man of you shall chase a thousand: for the LORD your God, he it is that fighteth for you, as he hath promised you. 11. Take good heed therefore unto yourselves, that ye love the LORD your God. 12. Else if ye do in any wise go back, and cleave unto the remnant of these nations, even these that remain among you, and shall make marriages with them, and go

in unto them, and they to you : 13. know for a certainty that the **LORD** your God will no more drive out any of these nations from before you : but they shall be snares and traps unto you, and scourges in your sides, and thorns in your eyes, until ye perish from off this good land which the **LORD** your God hath given you. 14. And, behold, this day I am going the way of all the earth : and ye know in all your hearts and in all your souls, that not one thing hath failed of all the good things which the **LORD** your God spake concerning you ; all are come to pass unto you, and not one thing hath failed thereof.

His death and burial.—xxiv. 29. And it came to pass after these things, that Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the **LORD**, died, being an hundred and ten years old. 30. And they buried him in the border of his inheritance in Timnath-serah, which is in mount Ephraim, on the north side of the hill of Gaash. 31. And Israel served the **LORD** all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua, and which had known all the works of the **LORD**, that he had done for Israel.

29. Before his death Joshua exacted from the people a renewed promise to keep their *covenant* obligations ; above, pp. 48, 51.

30. **Timnath-serah**, called also in *Judg.* ii. 9 **Timnath-herez** = “*Portion of the Sun.*” A tomb nine miles south-west of **Shechem** is shown to the modern traveller as that of Joshua.



PART V
THE AGE OF THE JUDGES



THE AGE OF THE JUDGES

c. 1150-1030 B.C. (?)¹

INTRODUCTORY

WITH the death of Joshua the Hebrews were left without a national leader. As compared with Moses even he had been rather the leader of a section than of the whole nation. He had little authority in

¹ All attempts to reach anything like an exact chronology of early Hebrew history are admittedly imperfect: any dates given are hypothetical, and rest on a comparison of the figures and events given in the Scripture narrative with those of profane records and monuments. If, however, our two limits are at all near the mark —viz. 1214 B.C. for the Exodus, and 1027 B.C. for Saul's accession —a provisional date scheme should run something in this way:

Exodus	c. 1214 B.C.
Death of Moses	c. 1174 "
" " Joshua	c. 1149 "
" " Eleazar and ac- cession of Phinehas	} c. 1149 "

Accession of Eli, before 1113 (1 Sam. iv. 18)	"
Battle of Aphek and death of Eli, aged 98 (1 Sam. iv. 15 and vii. 2), before 1073	"
Saul king	c. 1053 "

These indeed should probably be placed earlier still, for Samuel was "old" by the time of Saul's accession (1 Sam. viii. 1), but was clearly young at the time of Eli's death.

We must suppose that the various judgeships were local and often contemporaneous in their tenure: it is vain to attempt a chronology by adding together the years of the judgeships and the peaceful intervals, which gives a total of 410 years! The scheme here suggested seems more consonant with the facts. It reduces the interval between Joshua and Saul to a small span; and Eli was born, it would seem, even before Joshua's death.

Another indication that the period of the Judges was not much more than a century in duration is given in connection with the

Judah. Government was henceforth carried on locally by the heads of families and the elders, or princes, of the tribes. In their hands lay the chief administrative, military, and judicial powers. A legislative body was unnecessary in their constitution: the Mosaic law, as far as it was then developed, was the only law, and Jehovah was their King (Judg. viii. 23). Religious authority resided in the clergy, *i.e.* the Levites, and in *the* priest at the sanctuary in Shiloh. At Eleazar's death Phinehas undertook this office (xx. 28), but apparently not long after Phinehas' death we find Eli, who was descended from Ithamar, Aaron's younger son, succeeding to the priesthood.

Occasions, however, arose which called for a military dictator to champion the cause of a tribe, or a coalition of tribes, against the aggression of dispossessed and disaffected neighbours. In response to this call arose the Judges, the story of whose achievements is described in the book bearing their name. It is important to observe that these Judges must have been local, not national, leaders, though the editor of their memorials in a later day speaks of them in the latter sense. They assisted the tribes in rendering permanent and secure the settlements which Joshua had made in an only half-conquered country. Though the glory of their strategic exploits looms large in the tale, yet there were in the different localities prolonged spells of peace and "rest," the record of which is usually dismissed in an insignificant sentence.

history of David's family and our Lord's ancestry (Matt. i. etc.). Rahab, the heroine of Jericho, married Salmon; their son Boaz married Ruth, who was David's great-grandmother. These five generations from Rahab to David could not have been spread over as much as 410 years. But they do tally with a scheme which places the capture of Jericho at about 1174 B.C. and the birth of David about 1040 B.C.

Little cohesion existed among the tribes: and this disunion was a cause of their inability to resist hostile onslaughts. The mountainous nature of the country they occupied contributed towards the isolation of the tribes: it also explains the character of the tactics so often exhibited in their warlike enterprises (Ai and Gibeah, etc.). From their heathen neighbours the clans, nomads no longer, learned the arts of husbandry and other products of the advanced civilisation upon which they had come down. At the same time their loyalty to Jehovah did not remain altogether proof against the inducement to associate the usages of heathen idol-worship with their own rites, and one of the most pressing duties of the Judges was to recall their lapsed countrymen to a stricter purity in their worship of their God.

On the whole the picture of these days presented by the book is a gloomy one. It is a troubled period of transition, a period of advancement in learning, trade, and art, counterbalanced by moral and religious degeneracy and internal disorganisation. There is a touch of nature in the cry that soon arose for concentration and a king. (For a lucid outline of the social life of the period see Mr. H. Maynard Smith's article "Judges" in *Murray's I.B.D.*).

The book of Judges is a compilation from three distinct sources. (1) Chapters i.-ii. 5 consist of fragments of an old account of the conquest of Canaan, from which also portions of the book of Joshua had been derived. This section treats of events not subsequent, but previous, to Joshua's death (the opening words of chap. i. being the redactor's addition). It is parallel to, not a continuation of, that book. But it represents the attempts of separate tribes rather than a united invasion under his leadership. (2) Chapters

ii. 6-xvi. form the main body of the book. They comprise a series of narratives of early date which have been edited with appropriate introductions and conclusions, in accordance with his philosophy of history, by a Deuteronomic¹ redactor. He has arranged the stories in a framework in which he exhibits his theory of the occasion and nature of the work which the Judges were called upon to undertake. In each picture there recur "the same successions of apostasy, subjugation, the cry for help, deliverance, described often in the same, always in similar phraseology." The narratives, when the romantic element has been stripped off, appear, in their leading features, to be a correct sketch of what occurred; and "Deborah's song in chap. v. bears every mark of being the work of a contemporary poet" (Ott.). It is the oldest surviving Hebrew poem of any length. (3) Chapters xvii.-xxi. This section again differs in character and origin from the other two. It relates, not the exploits of any Judge, but two incidents belonging to an archaic period of Israelitish life in Palestine. Of these the second narrative—that of the Benjamites—is itself composite. This part was written before the Exile.

These three sections were subsequently, probably in the Captivity, welded together to form our present book. (Dr. L.O.T., pp. 152 seq.)

OTHNIEL
Judges iii. 7-11

7. And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD, and forgat the LORD their GOD, and served Baalim

¹ See pp. xvi, 24.

² For the contrast between Hebrew and Greek methods of treating their heroic narratives see G. Murray, *Rise of the Greek Epic*, pp. 155 seq. The title "judges" (*Shophetim*) is peculiar to the Semites: cf. the *Suffetes* of the Carthaginians, who were of Semitic origin.

7. **Baalim**, plur. of Baal, means "lords." The Canaanites called

and the groves. 8. Therefore the anger of the LORD was hot against Israel, and he sold them into the hand of Chushan-rishathaim king of Mesopotamia: and the children of Israel served Chushan-rishathaim eight years. 9. And when the children of Israel cried unto the LORD, the LORD raised up a deliverer to the children of Israel, who delivered them, even Othniel the son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother. 10. And the Spirit of the LORD came upon him, and he judged Israel, and went out to war: and the LORD delivered Chushan-rishathaim king of Mesopotamia into his hand; and his hand prevailed against Chushan-rishathaim. 11. And the land had rest forty years. And Othniel the son of Kenaz died.

EHUD AND THE MOABITES

Judges iii. 12-31

12. And the children of Israel did evil again in the sight of the LORD: and the LORD strengthened Eglon the king of Moab against Israel, because they had done evil in the sight of the LORD. 13. And he gathered unto him the

by this title the local gods, whom they supposed to preside over their agriculture, and to confer fertility. The Hebrews began so far to conform to this practice as even to call Jehovah by the name Baal. This was presently denounced by the prophets. Baal became so infamous a term as not even to be pronounced, and the term *bosheth* ("shame") was substituted for it wherever it occurred. Hence Ishbaal's name was changed to Ishbosheth, Meribbaal's to Mephibosheth, etc. Jerubbaal (Gideon) is likewise called Jerubbesheth in 2 Sam. xi. 21.

groves = the *Asheroth*. These were sacred poles, often placed beside a heathen altar in Canaan. Their origin, like that of the English Maypole, perhaps was in a primitive tree-worship. Others hold that they were symbols of an (unidentified) goddess of fertility.

9. **Othniel.** He had captured Debir (Josh. xv. 16) and married Achsah, Caleb's daughter. His exact relationship to Caleb is not clear; the references to him in our texts differ.

children of Ammon and Amalek, and went and smote Israel, and possessed the city of palm trees. 14. So the children of Israel served Eglon the king of Moab eighteen years. 15. But when the children of Israel cried unto the LORD, the LORD raised them up a deliverer, Ehud the son of Gera, a Benjamite, a man lefthanded: and by him the children of Israel sent a present unto Eglon the king of Moab. 16. But Ehud made him a dagger which had two edges, of a cubit length; and he did gird it under his raiment upon his right thigh. 17. And he brought the present unto Eglon king of Moab: and Eglon was a very fat man. 18. And when he had made an end to offer the present, he sent away the people that bare the present.

Assassination of Eglon.—19. But he himself turned again from the quarries that were by Gilgal, and said, I have a secret errand unto thee, O king: who said, Keep silence. And all that stood by him went out from him. 20. And Ehud came unto him; and he was sitting in a summer parlour, which he had for himself alone. And Ehud said, I have a message from God unto thee. And *Eglon* arose out of his seat. 21. And Ehud put forth his left hand, and took the dagger from his right thigh, and thrust it into his belly: 22. and the haft also went in after the blade; and the fat closed upon the blade, so that he could not draw the dagger out of his belly. 23. Then Ehud went forth through the porch, and shut the doors of the parlour upon him, and locked them. 24. When he was

13. city of palm trees = Jericho. For the ease with which her successive assailants were always able to reduce her see above, p. 112 *n.*

15. a present, *i.e.* the tribute which the king exacted.

19. quarries = better, "sculptured stones," *i.e.* rude stone images. Possibly some allusion is intended to the memorial stones set up by Joshua after crossing the river; above, p. 107 *n.*

gone out, his servants came ; and when they saw that, behold, the doors of the parlour were locked, 25. they tarried till they were ashamed : and, behold, he opened not the doors of the parlour ; therefore they took a key, and opened them : and, behold, their lord was fallen down dead on the earth..

General assault upon the Moabite invaders.—26. And Ehud escaped while they tarried, and passed beyond the quarries, and escaped unto Seirath. 27. And it came to pass, when he was come, that he blew a trumpet in the mountain of Ephraim, and the children of Israel went down with him from the mount, and he before them. 28. And he said unto them, Follow after me : for the LORD hath delivered your enemies the Moabites into your hand. And they went down after him, and took the fords of Jordan toward Moab, and suffered not a man to pass over. 29. And they slew of Moab at that time about ten thousand men, all lusty, and all men of valour ; and there escaped not a man. 30. So Moab was subdued that day under the hand of Israel. And the land had rest fourscore years.

Shamgar and the Philistines.—31. And after him was Shamgar the son of Anath, which slew of the Philistines six hundred men, with an ox goad : and he also delivered Israel.

BARAK, DEBORAH, AND THE NORTHERN CANAANITES Judges iv. and v

iv. 1. And the children of Israel again did evil in the sight of the LORD, when Ehud was dead. 2. And the LORD

26. *Seirath.* In Mount Ephraim ; site unknown.

28. *I.e.* he prevented the Moabites who were in occupation of Jericho and its neighbourhood from escaping across Jordan to their own country.

sold them into the hand of Jabin king of Canaan, that reigned in Hazor ; the captain of whose host was Sisera, which dwelt in Harosheth of the Gentiles. 3. And the children of Israel cried unto the LORD : for he had nine hundred chariots of iron ; and twenty years he mightily oppressed the children of Israel.

Deborah organises resistance.—4. And Deborah, a prophetess, the wife of Lapidoth, she judged Israel at that time. 5. And she dwelt under the palm tree of Deborah between Ramah and Beth-el in mount Ephraim : and the children of Israel came up to her for judgment. 6. And she sent and called Barak the son of Abinoam out of Kedesh-naphtali, and said unto him, Hath not the LORD God of Israel commanded, saying, Go and draw toward mount Tabor, and take with thee ten thousand men of the children of Naphtali and of the children of Zebulun ? 5. And I will draw unto thee to the river Kishon Sisera, the captain of Jabin's army, with his chariots and his multitude ; and I will deliver him into thine hand. 8. And Barak said unto her, If thou wilt go with me, then I will go : but if thou wilt not go with me, then I will not go. 9. And she said, I will surely go with thee : notwithstanding the journey that thou takest shall not be for thine honour ; for the LORD shall sell Sisera into the hand of a woman. And Deborah arose, and went with Barak to Kedesh.

Barak encamps on Mount Tabor.—10. And Barak called Zebulun and Naphtali to Kedesh ; and he went up with ten

iv. 2. For another Jabin, and Hazor, see above, p. 123. Harosheth was in the south-west corner of Zebulun, in the plain of Esraelon just north of the river Kishon. For the other places see map.

The reader is again asked to observe how the biographer attempts in the case of each *local* Judge to represent him as a *national* deliverer.

4. **Deborah.** This heroine's name should, strictly, be pronounced Debōrah, as readers of *Cranford* will recall with a smile.

thousand men at his feet : and Deborah went up with him. 11. Now Heber the Kenite, which was of the children of Hobab the father in law of Moses, had severed himself from the Kenites, and pitched his tent unto the plain of Zaanaim, which is by Kedesh. 12. And they shewed Sisera that Barak the son of Abinoam was gone up to mount Tabor. 13. And Sisera gathered together all his chariots, even nine hundred chariots of iron, and all the people that were with him, from Harosheth of the Gentiles unto the river of Kishon.

The battle.—14. And Deborah said unto Barak, Up ; for this is the day in which the LORD hath delivered Sisera into thine hand : is not the LORD gone out before thee ? So Barak went down from mount Tabor, and ten thousand men after him. 15. And the LORD discomfited Sisera, and all his chariots, and all his host, with the edge of the sword before Barak ; so that Sisera lighted down off his chariot, and fled away on his feet. 16. But Barak pursued after the chariots, and after the host, unto Harosheth of the Gentiles : and all the host of Sisera fell upon the edge of the sword ; and there was not a man left. 17. Howbeit Sisera fled away on his feet to the tent of Jael the wife of Heber the Kenite ; for there was peace between Jabin the king of Hazor and the house of Heber the Kenite.

Murder of Sisera.—18. And Jael went out to meet Sisera, and said unto him, Turn in, my lord, turn in to me : fear not. - And when he had turned in unto her into the tent, she covered him with a mantle. 19. And he said unto her, Give me, I pray thee, a little water to drink ; for I am

11. **Kenite.** Some of this clan, whose home was in the south country among the Midianites, had joined the Israelites in their invasion of Palestine, and settled in the territory of Judah.

thirsty. And she opened a bottle of milk, and gave him drink, and covered him. 20. Again he said unto her, Stand in the door of the tent, and it shall be, when any man doth come and enquire of thee, and say, Is there any man here? that thou shalt say, No. 21. Then Jael Heber's wife took a nail of the tent, and took an hammer in her hand, and went softly unto him, and smote the nail into his temples, and fastened it into the ground: for he was fast asleep and weary. So he died. 22. And, behold, as Barak pursued Sisera, Jael came out to meet him, and said unto him, Come, and I will shew thee the man whom thou seekest. And when he came into her tent, behold, Sisera lay dead, and the nail was in his temples.

Destruction of Jabin.—23. So God subdued on that day Jabin the king of Canaan before the children of Israel. 24. And the hand of the children of Israel prospered, and prevailed against Jabin the king of Canaan, until they had destroyed Jabin king of Canaan.

Song of Deborah.—v. 1. Then sang Deborah and Barak the son of Abinoam on that day, saying,

PART I. THE GATHERING OF THE TRIBES

Prelude.—2. Praise ye the LORD for the avenging of Israel, when the people willingly offered themselves.

19. *bottle*—made of skins.

21. *nail* = tent-peg.

v. 1. The song preserves a tradition of the battle which is in origin independent of the prose version of chap. iv.; but the slight inconsistencies between the narratives need not delay us. "The poet does not rise above the moral level of the rude and barbarous age in which he lived. His estimate of Jael's foul deed was possible only in the age of tents" (Ott.). But the poem breathes a spirit of patriotism and religious fervour which was much wanted in those days (*cf.* Psalm lxviii.). The headings to the divisions of the song are taken from Mr. Lias' version: *Camb. Bib.*, "Judges," p. 210.

2 b. The people volunteered for military service.

Jehovah's glory.—3. Hear, O ye kings ; give ear, O ye princes ; I, even I, will sing unto the **LORD** ; I will sing praise to the **LORD** God of Israel.

4. **LORD**, when thou wentest out of Seir, when thou marchedst out of the field of Edom, the earth trembled, and the heavens dropped, the clouds also dropped water.

5. The mountains melted from before the **LORD**, even yon Sinai from before the **LORD** God of Israel.

Israel's affliction.—6. In the days of Shamgar the son of Anath, in the days of Jael, the highways were unoccupied, and the travellers walked through byways.

7. The inhabitants of the villages ceased, they ceased in Israel, until that I Deborah arose, that I arose a mother in Israel.

8. They chose new gods ; then was war in the gates : was there a shield or spear seen among forty thousand in Israel ?

Israel's thanksgiving.—9. My heart is toward the governors of Israel, that offered themselves willingly among the people. Bless ye the **LORD**.

10. Speak, ye that ride on white asses, ye that sit on rich carpets, and walk by the way.

11. *Far* from the noise of archers, in the places of drawing water, there shall they rehearse the righteous acts of the **LORD**, even the righteous acts toward the inhabitants of

4 refers to the final march round Edom at the end of the Wanderings, above, pp. 76-8.

7. Either "the villages" (*i.e.* unwalled encampments, in which many of the Israelites seem to have dwelt in the early days of the settlement in Canaan) "were unoccupied," or, with R.V., "the rulers ceased."

These verses show the weakness, the restlessness, and the irreligion of those days.

8 *b* means that the Hebrews dared not show their weapons, though they had them.

his villages in Israel: then shall the people of the LORD go down to the gates.

PART II. THE BATTLE

Prelude.—12. Awake, awake, Deborah: awake, awake, utter a song: arise, Barak, and lead thy captivity captive, thou son of Abinoam.

The Praise of the Patriots.—13. Then he made *a remnant* to have dominion over the nobles among the people: the LORD made me have dominion over the mighty.

14. Out of Ephraim *came down they whose root is in Amalek*; after thee, Benjamin, among thy people: out of Machir came down governors, and out of Zebulun they that handle the pen of the writer.

15. And the princes of Issachar were with Deborah: even Issachar, and also Barak: *into the valley they rushed forth at his feet.*

12. *lead thy captivity captive.* The only meaning of this, in English, can be, "Lead thy *captors* themselves captive." The Hebrew *could* be taken to mean this (Moore, *Judges*, p. 150); but more probably it is just an example of the idiom called prolepsis, and means "lead captive thy *captives*."

13. *he* = Jehovah. *a remnant*, *i.e.* a few loyal ones, from a few of the tribes.

14. *I.e.* a detachment of Ephraimites joined the army. Some Amalekites had settlements in Mount Ephraim, as is shown by xii. 15. *after thee.* The Hebrew text is "desperate" here. It is possible, however, to extract a sense without resorting to emendation: "'After thee,' O Benjamin, was heard among thy people," *i.e.* one could hear the Benjamites getting ready for the fray and shouting their battle-cry, "After thee," which means "Here I am, ready to support you." The Benjamites were quick to come in support of a quarrel. *Cp.* the "With you," often heard on the football field as it is cried by one player to another. The phrase is used also in Hosea v. 9. *Machir* = Manasseh. In the song six tribes are represented as joining in the fight; in the prose version of chap. iv. only two, Zebulun and Naphtali.

the pen of the writer. R.V. "the marshal's staff," which aptly expresses the warlike powers of the tribe.

15, 16. There was a great communal debate among the Reubenites whether to join in or not. They decided against joining.

The Reproach of the Laggards.—15 b. *By the watercourses* of Reuben there were great thoughts of heart.

16. Why abodest thou among the sheepfolds, to hear the bleatings of the flocks ? *By the watercourses* of Reuben there were great searchings of heart.

17. Gilead abode beyond Jordan : and why did Dan remain in ships ? Asher continued on the sea shore, and abode in his breaches.

Praise of Patriots.—18. Zebulun and Naphtali were a people that jeopardized their lives unto the death in the high places of the field.

The Defeat.—19. The kings came and fought, then fought the kings of Canaan in Taanach by the waters of Megiddo ; they took no gain of money.

20. They fought from heaven ; the stars in their courses fought against Sisera.

21. The river of Kishon swept them away, that ancient river, the river Kishon. O my soul, thou hast trodden down strength.

22. Then *did* the horsehoofs *stamp* by the means of the pransings, the pransings of their mighty ones.

The Curse of Meroz.—23. Curse ye Meroz, said the angel of the LORD, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof : because they came not to the help of the LORD, to the help of the LORD against the mighty.

The Praise of Jael.—24. Blessed above women shall Jael the wife of Heber the Kenite be, blessed shall she be above women in the tent.

17. *breaches* = “ by his creeks.”

20. *They*—means, vaguely, the heavenly powers—stars, etc.

21 b means “ Thou hast humbled the strong enemy.” R.V., using the imperative mood, reads : “ march on with strength.”

23. *Meroz.* Nothing is known of this place beyond what is told here. Obviously it was in the invaded district.

25. He asked water, and she gave him milk ; she brought forth butter in a lordly dish.

26. She put her hand to the nail, and her right hand to the workmen's hammer ; and with the hammer she smote Sisera, she smote off his head, when she had pierced and stricken through his temples.

27. At her feet he bowed, he fell, he lay down : at her feet he bowed, he fell : where he bowed there he fell down dead.

Sisera's mother awaiting him.—28. The mother of Sisera looked out at a window, and cried through the lattice, Why is his chariot so long in coming ? why tarry the wheels of his chariots ?

29. Her wise ladies answered her, yea, she returned answer to herself,

30. Have they not *found* ? have they not divided the *spoil* ; to every man a damsel or two ; to Sisera a *spoil* of divers colours, a *spoil* of divers colours of needlework, of divers colours of needlework on both sides, on the necks of the spoil ?

Chorus.—31. So let all thine enemies perish, O LORD : but let them that love him be as the sun when he goeth forth in his might.

And the land had rest forty years.

GIDEON AND THE MIDIANITES

Judges vi.-viii

vi. 1. And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD : and the LORD delivered them into the hand of Midian

30. on the necks of the spoil means that these rich embroideries were found by the victors adorning the necks of their captives.

seven years. 2. And the hand of Midian prevailed against Israel : and because of the Midianites the children of Israel made them the dens which are in the mountains, and caves, and strong holds. 3. And so it was, when Israel had sown, that the Midianites came up, and the Amalekites, and the children of the east, even they came up against them ; 4. and they encamped against them, and destroyed the increase of the earth, till thou come unto Gaza, and left no sustenance for Israel, neither sheep, nor ox, nor ass. 5. For they came up with their cattle and their tents, and they came as grasshoppers for multitude ; for both they and their camels were without number : and they entered into the land to destroy it. 6. And Israel was greatly impoverished because of the Midianites ; and the children of Israel cried unto the **LORD**.

*A prophet declares Israel's distress to be deserved.—*7. And it came to pass, when the children of Israel cried unto the **LORD** because of the Midianites, 8. that the **LORD** sent a prophet unto the children of Israel, which said unto them, Thus saith the **LORD** God of Israel, I brought you up from Egypt, and brought you forth out of the house of bondage ; 9. and I delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians, and out of the hand of all that oppressed you, and drove them out from before you, and gave you their land ; 10. and I said unto you, I am the **LORD** your God ; fear not the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell : but ye have not obeyed my voice.

4. **Gaza.** One of the Philistine cities on the south-west maritime plain. That the raiders should have penetrated so far shows the widespread nature of the raids. It was seen above how Palestine always has been subject to raids of this sort from Arabs and other desert tribes who drift in from the waste stretches of country east of Jordan.

A divine summons is sent to Gideon.—11. And there came an angel of the LORD, and sat under an oak which was in Ophrah, that pertained unto Joash the Abi-ezrite: and his son Gideon threshed wheat by the winepress, to hide it from the Midianites. 12. And the angel of the LORD appeared unto him, and said unto him, The LORD is with thee, thou mighty man of valour. 13. And Gideon said unto him, Oh my Lord, if the LORD be with us, why then is all this befallen us? and where be all his miracles which our fathers told us of, saying, Did not the LORD bring us up from Egypt? but now the LORD hath forsaken us, and delivered us into the hands of the Midianites. 14. And the LORD looked upon him, and said, Go in this thy might, and thou shalt save Israel from the hand of the Midianites: have not I sent thee? 15. And he said unto him, Oh my Lord, wherewith shall I save Israel? behold, my family is poor in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house. 16. And the LORD said unto him, Surely I will be with thee, and thou shalt smite the Midianites as one man. 17. And he said unto him, If now I have found grace in thy sight, then shew me a sign that thou talkest with me. 18. Depart not hence, I pray thee, until I come unto thee, and bring forth my present, and set it before thee. And he said, I will tarry until thou come again.

A sign is given to him.—19. And Gideon went in, and made ready a kid, and unleavened cakes of an ephah of flour: the flesh he put in a basket, and he put the broth in a pot, and brought it out unto him under the oak, and presented it. 20. And the angel of God said unto him, Take the flesh and the unleavened cakes, and lay them

11. Ophrah is in Manasseh, six miles west of Shechem. Abiezrites ("sons" of Abiezer) were a leading family in the tribe of Manasseh.

upon this rock, and pour out the broth. And he did so. 21. Then the angel of the LORD put forth the end of the staff that was in his hand, and touched the flesh and the unleavened cakes: and there rose up fire out of the rock, and consumed the flesh and the unleavened cakes. Then the angel of the LORD departed out of his sight. 22. And when Gideon perceived that he was an angel of the LORD, Gideon said, Alas, O Lord God ! for because I have seen an angel of the LORD face to face. 23. And the LORD said unto him, Peace be unto thee ; fear not : thou shalt not die. 24. Then Gideon built an altar there unto the LORD, and called it Jehovah-shalom : unto this day it is yet in Ophrah of the Abi-ezrites.

He overthrows the heathen altar.—25. And it came to pass the same night, that the LORD said unto him, Take thy father's young bullock, *and* the second bullock of seven years old, and throw down the altar of Baal that thy father hath, and cut down the grove that is by it : 26. and build an altar unto the LORD thy God upon the top of this rock, in the ordered place, and take the second bullock, and offer a burnt sacrifice with the wood of the grove which thou shalt cut down. 27. Then Gideon took ten men of his servants, and did as the LORD had said unto him : and so it was, because he feared his father's house. hold, and the men of the city, that he could not do it by day, that he did it by night. 28. And when the men of the city arose early in the morning, behold, the altar of Baal was cast down, and the grove was cut down that

24. Jehovah-shalom = The LORD is Peace.

25. Moore says "text corrupt," and translates "and the second" by "even the fat" bullock. But there appear to have been two bullocks ; and the second one, which was sacrificed, belonged to Gideon. *grove*, i.e. the *Asherah*, or idolatrous pole.

was by it, and the second bullock was offered upon the altar that was built. 29. And they said one to another, Who hath done this thing ? And when they enquired and asked, they said, Gideon the son of Joash hath done this thing. 30. Then the men of the city said unto Joash, Bring out thy son, that he may die : because he hath cast down the altar of Baal, and because he hath cut down the grove that was by it. 31. And Joash said unto all that stood against him, Will ye plead for Baal ? will ye save him ? he that will plead for him, let him be put to death whilst it is yet morning : if he be a god, let him plead for himself, because one hath cast down his altar. 32. Therefore on that day he called him Jerubbaal, saying, Let Baal plead against him, because he hath thrown down his altar.

Mobilisation of Northern Israel's forces.—33. Then all the Midianites and the Amalekites and the children of the east were gathered together, and went over, and pitched in the valley of Jezreel. 34. But the Spirit of the LORD came upon Gideon, and he blew a trumpet ; and Abi-ezer was gathered after him. 35. And he sent messengers throughout all Manasseh ; who also was gathered after him : and he sent messengers unto Asher, and unto Zebulun, and unto Naphtali ; and they came up to meet them.

Gideon is convinced that the Spirit has called him.—36. And Gideon said unto God, If thou wilt save Israel by mine hand, as thou hast said, 37. behold, I will put a fleece of wool in the floor ; and if the dew be on the fleece

32. he called him. Joash called Gideon. In 2 Sam. xi. 21 Gideon is called Jerubbesheth, *i.e.* "Let the shameful thing contend."

33. Jezreel, in Issachar, is a town on the watershed parting the Mediterranean rivers from the Jordan rivers. From it the Plain of Esdraelon spreads to the west and the valley of Jezreel slopes to Jordan on the east. Harod (vii. 1) is at the head of this valley, just east of the town, and south of the Midianite encampment.

only, and it be dry upon all the earth beside, then shall I know that thou wilt save Israel by mine hand, as thou hast said. 38. And it was so : for he rose up early on the morrow, and thrust the fleece together, and wringed the dew out of the fleece, a bowl full of water. 39. And Gideon said unto God, Let not thine anger be hot against me, and I will speak but this once : let me prove, I pray thee, but this once with the fleece ; let it now be dry only upon the fleece, and upon all the ground let there be dew. 40. And God did so that night : for it was dry upon the fleece only, and there was dew on all the ground.

Testing and selection of the troops.—vii. 1. Then Jerubbaal, who is Gideon, and all the people that were with him, rose up early, and pitched beside the well of Harod : so that the host of the Midianites were on the north side of them, by the hill of Moreh, in the valley. 2. And the LORD said unto Gideon, The people that are with thee are too many for me to give the Midianites into their hands, lest Israel vaunt themselves against me, saying, Mine own hand hath saved me. 3. Now therefore go to, proclaim in the ears of the people, saying, Whosoever is fearful and afraid, let him return and depart early from mount Gilead. And there returned of the people twenty and two thousand ; and there remained ten thousand. 4. And the LORD said unto Gideon, The people are yet too many ; bring them down unto the water, and I will try them for thee there : and it shall be, that of whom I say unto thee, This shall go with thee,

38. The first sign was not conclusive, for wool naturally attracts dew.

3. (1) Mount Gilead seems to stand for Mount Gilboa, or (2) this is possibly a proverbial expression in the Manasseh tribe, meaning "slink from the field of battle." But Hebrew scholars are able only to guess at the meaning.

the same shall go with thee; and of whomsoever I say unto thee, This shall not go with thee, the same shall not go. 5. So he brought down the people unto the water: and the LORD said unto Gideon, Every one that lappeth of the water with his tongue, as a dog lappeth, him shalt thou set by himself; likewise every one that boweth down upon his knees to drink. 6. And the number of them that lapped, [putting their hand to their mouth,] were three hundred men: but all the rest of the people bowed down upon their knees to drink water. 7. And the LORD said unto Gideon, By the three hundred men that lapped will I save you, and deliver the Midianites into thine hand: and let all the other people go every man unto his place. 8. So the people took victuals in their hand, and their trumpets: and he sent all the rest of Israel every man unto his tent, and retained those three hundred men: and the host of Midian was beneath him in the valley.

A reconnoitring adventure.—9. And it came to pass the same night, that the LORD said unto him, Arise, get thee down unto the host; for I have delivered it into thine hand. 10. But if thou fear to go down, go thou with Phurah thy servant down to the host: 11. and thou shalt hear what they say; and afterward shall thine hands be strengthened to go down unto the host. Then went he down with Phurah his servant unto the outside of the armed men that were in the host. 12. And the Midianites and the Amalekites and all the children of the east lay

6. The words in brackets are an erroneous gloss: the two ways of drinking here distinguished are (1) lying down flat and lapping with the tongue like a dog, and (2) raising water to the mouth with the hand while the drinker kneels down. The former is the quicker and more business-like method. Those using it were selected.

along in the valley like grasshoppers for multitude ; and their camels were without number, as the sand by the sea side for multitude. 13. And when Gideon was come, behold, there was a man that told a dream unto his fellow, and said, Behold, I dreamed a dream, and, lo, a cake of barley bread tumbled into the host of Midian, and came unto a tent, and smote it that it fell, and overturned it, that the tent lay along. 14. And his fellow answered and said, This is nothing else save the sword of Gideon the son of Joash, a man of Israel : for into his hand hath God delivered Midian, and all the host.

Attack orders are issued.—15. And it was so, when Gideon heard the telling of the dream, and the interpretation thereof, that he worshipped and returned into the host of Israel, and said, Arise ; for the LORD hath delivered into your hand the host of Midian. 16. And he divided the three hundred men into three companies, and he put a trumpet in every man's hand, with empty pitchers, and lamps within the pitchers. 17. And he said unto them, Look on me, and do likewise : and, behold, when I come to the outside of the camp, it shall be that, as I do, so shall ye do. 18. When I blow with a trumpet, I and all that are with me, then blow ye the trumpets also on every side of all the camp, and say, The sword of the LORD, and of Gideon.

The assault.—19. So Gideon, and the hundred men that were with him, came unto the outside of the camp in the beginning of the middle watch ; and they had but newly set the watch : and they blew the trumpets, and brake the pitchers that were in their hands. 20. And the three companies blew the trumpets, and brake the pitchers,

19. **middle watch.** In O.T. times there were only three watches : the middle watch lasted from about 10 p.m. till 2 a.m.

and held the lamps in their left hands, and the trumpets in their right hands to blow withal: and they cried, The sword of the LORD, and of Gideon. 21. And they stood every man in his place round about the camp: and all the host ran, and cried, and fled. 22. And the three hundred blew the trumpets, and the LORD set every man's sword against his fellow, even throughout all the host: and the host fled to Beth-shittah in Zererath, and to the border of Abel-meholah, unto Tabbath. 23. And the men of Israel gathered themselves together out of Naphtali, and out of Asher, and out of all Manasseh, and pursued after the Midianites.

Oreb and Zeeb captured on the west of Jordan.—24. And Gideon sent messengers throughout all mount Ephraim, saying, Come down against the Midianites, and take before them the waters unto Beth-barah, and Jordan. Then all the men of Ephraim gathered themselves together, and took the waters unto Beth-barah, and Jordan. 25. And they took two princes of the Midianites, Oreb and Zeeb; and they slew Oreb upon the rock of Oreb, and Zeeb they slew at the winepress of Zeeb, and pursued Midian; and brought the heads of Oreb and Zeeb to Gideon on the other side Jordan.

Jealousy of Ephraim; on east of Jordan.—viii. 1. And the men of Ephraim said unto him, Why hast thou served us thus, that thou calledst us not, when thou wentest to

22. The fugitives ran eastwards. Abel-meholah, the future home of Elisha, was in the Jordan Valley.

24. *take before*, *i.e.* hold all the streams that flow into Jordan, as far as Beth-barah and hold Jordan itself. In spite of these precautions many Midianites seem to have got away both to the south and also across Jordan. The rock of Oreb ("the raven") and the wine-press of Zeeb ("the wolf") have been identified as far south as the neighbourhood of Jericho.

viii. 1-14. Cf. a similar episode with Jephthah, below, p. 168.

fight with the Midianites ? And they did chide with him sharply. 2. And he said unto them, What have I done now in comparison of you ? Is not the gleanings of the grapes of Ephraim better than the vintage of Abi-ezer ? 3. God hath delivered into your hands the princes of Midian, Oreb and Zeeb : and what was I able to do in comparison of you ? Then their anger was abated toward him, when he had said that.

Pursuit and capture of Zebah and Zalmunna, east of Jordan.

—4. And Gideon came to Jordan, and passed over, he, and the three hundred men that were with him, faint, yet pursuing them. 5. And he said unto the men of Succoth, Give, I pray you, loaves of bread unto the people that follow me : for they be faint, and I am pursuing after Zebah and Zalmunna, kings of Midian. 6. And the princes of Succoth said, Are the hands of Zebah and Zalmunna now in thine hand, that we should give bread unto thine army ? 7. And Gideon said, Therefore when the LORD hath delivered Zebah and Zalmunna into mine hand, then I will tear your flesh with the thorns of the wilderness and with briars. 8. And he went up thence to Penuel, and spake unto them likewise : and the men of Penuel answered him as the men of Succoth had answered him. 9. And he spake also unto the men of Penuel, saying, When I come again in peace, I will break down this tower. 10. Now

2. *I.e.* "Though you only came in at the end to gather up the remnant of the grapes, you have achieved that which is worth more than our entire vintage [or gathering of the grape harvest]. Your capture of the two princes is more important than our previous victory."

4. The slight inconsistency by which Gideon is here regarded as still on the west of Jordan is probably due to the fact that the Deuteronomic compiler drew from a separate record his account of Gideon's second victory, and has not made the continuity of his story quite perfect.

Zebah and Zalmunna were in Karkor, and their hosts with them, about fifteen thousand men, all that were left of all the hosts of the children of the east: for there fell an hundred and twenty thousand men that drew sword. 11. And Gideon went up by the way of them that dwelt in tents on the east of Nobah and Jogbehah, and smote the host: for the host was secure. 12. And when Zebah and Zalmunna fled, he pursued after them, and took the two kings of Midian, Zebah and Zalmunna, and discomfited all the host.

Retribution on the disdainful cities.—And Gideon the son of Joash returned from battle before the sun was up, 14. and caught a young man of the men of Succoth, and enquired of him: and he described unto him the princes of Succoth, and the elders thereof, even threescore and seventeen men. 15. And he came unto the men of Succoth, and said, Behold Zebah and Zalmunna, with whom ye did upbraid me, saying, Are the hands of Zebah and Zalmunna now in thine hand that we should give bread unto thy men that are weary? 16. And he took the elders of the city, and thorns of the wilderness and briars, and with them he taught the men of Succoth. 17. And he beat down the tower of Penuel, and slew the men of the city.

Slaughter of the two princes.—18. Then said he unto Zebah and Zalmunna, What manner of men were they whom ye slew at Tabor? And they answered, As thou art, so were they; each one resembled the children of a king. 19. And he said, They were my brethren, even the

10. The flight from the Jordan fords had been south-east, and the princes were captured at Karkor, a position beyond the mountains of Gilead towards the desert.

11. Gideon surprised them with a flank attack from the east, on which side they fancied themselves safe.

16. *taught*, *i.e.* punished.

sons of my mother ; as the **LORD** liveth, if ye had saved them alive, I would not slay you. 20. And he said unto Jether his firstborn, Up, and slay them. But the youth drew not his sword : for he feared, because he was yet a youth. 21. Then Zebah and Zalmunna said, Rise thou and fall upon us ; for as the man is, so is his strength. And Gideon arose, and slew Zebah and Zalmunna, and took away the ornaments that were on their camels' necks. 28. Thus was Midian subdued before the children of Israel, so that they lifted up their heads no more. And the country was in quietness forty years in the days of Gideon.

They "offer him a kingly crown."—22. Then the men of Israel said unto Gideon, Rule thou over us, both thou, and thy son, and thy son's son also : for thou hast delivered us from the hand of Midian. 23. And Gideon said unto them, I will not rule over you, neither shall my son rule over you : the **LORD** shall rule over you.

His subsequent life.—24. And Gideon said unto them, I would desire a request of you, that ye would give me every man the earrings of his prey. (For they had golden earrings, because they were Ishmaelites.) 25. And they answered, We will willingly give them. And they spread a garment, and did cast therein every man the earrings of his prey. 26. And the weight of the golden earrings that he requested was a thousand and seven hundred shekels of gold ; beside ornaments, and collars, and purple raiment that was on the kings of Midian, and beside the chains that were about their camels' necks. 27. And Gideon made an ephod thereof, and put it in his city, even

24. **Ishmaelites.** Here used interchangeably for Midianites. **Ear-rings**, or perhaps nose-rings. Cf. Rebekah's ring, Gen. xxiv. 47.

27. **ephod**—an image plated with gold, see p. 44. It was meant to represent Jehovah, contrary to the Second Commandment. This

in Ophrah: and all Israel went thither after it: which thing became a snare unto Gideon, and to his house. 29. And Jerubbaal the son of Joash went and dwelt in his own house. 30. And Gideon had threescore and ten sons of his body begotten: for he had many wives. 31. And his concubine that was in Shechem, she also bare him a son, whose name he called Abimelech.

His death, and the results of his dictatorship.—32. And Gideon the son of Joash died in a good old age, and was buried in the sepulchre of Joash his father, in Ophrah of the Abi-ezrites. 33. And it came to pass, as soon as Gideon was dead, that the children of Israel turned again, and went astray after Baalim, and made Baal-berith their god. 34. And the children of Israel remembered not the LORD their God, who had delivered them out of the hands of all their enemies on every side: 35. neither shewed they kindness to the house of Jerubbaal, namely, Gideon, according to all the goodness which he had shewed unto Israel.

ABIMELECH; A PREMATURE ATTEMPT TO FOUND A MONARCHY

Judges ix

1. And Abimelech the son of Jerubbaal went to Shechem unto his mother's brethren, and communed with them, and with all the family of the house of his mother's father, saying, 2. Speak, I pray you, in the ears of all the men was an idolatrous act on his part; but perhaps he thought that the Divine vision which had called him forth justified his pretensions to set up a new sanctuary.

30. Polygamy was allowed by Hebrew law, but became rare after the exile in Babylon.

33. Baal-berith = Lord of the Covenant. This was the title the Shechemites gave to their god (chap. ix.) in token of their friendly relations with their Hebrew neighbours.

of Shechem, Whether is better for you, either that all the sons of Jerubbaal, which are threescore and ten persons, reign over you, or that one reign over you ? remember also that I am your bone and your flesh. 3. And his mother's brethren spake of him in the ears of all the men of Shechem all these words : and their hearts inclined to follow Abimelech ; for they said, He is our brother. 4. And they gave him threescore and ten pieces of silver out of the house of Baal-berith, wherewith Abimelech hired vain and light persons, which followed him. 5. And he went unto his father's house at Ophrah, and slew his brethren the sons of Jerubbaal, being threescore and ten persons, upon one stone : notwithstanding yet Jotham the youngest son of Jerubbaal was left : for he hid himself. 6. And all the men of Shechem gathered together, and all the house of Millo, and went, and made Abimelech king, by the oak of the pillar that was in Shechem.

Jotham's fable.—7. And when they told it to Jotham, he went and stood in the top of mount Gerizim, and lifted up his voice, and cried, and said unto them, Hearken unto me, ye men of Shechem, that God may hearken unto you. 8. The trees went forth on a time to anoint a king over them ; and they said unto the olive tree, Reign thou over us. 9. But the olive tree said unto them, Should I leave my fatness, wherewith by me they honour God and man, and go to be promoted over the trees ? 10. And the

5. upon one stone. "The words imply a formal execution" (Murray's *I.B.D.*, from which much of the commentary on these passages is derived).

6. house of Millo. A local family or clan. The " pillar " refers to a monument set up by Joshua just before his death (Josh. xxiv. 26).

7. This and Jehoash's fable of the Thistle and Cedar (2 Kings xiv. 9) are the only two fables in the Bible. We saw above (p. 125) how easy it is to be heard at Mt. Gerizim.

trees said to the fig tree, Come thou, and reign over us. 11. But the fig tree said unto them, Should I forsake my sweetness, and my good fruit, and go to be promoted over the trees ? 12. Then said the trees unto the vine, Come thou, and reign over us. 13. And the vine said unto them, Should I leave my wine, which cheereth God and man, and go to be promoted over the trees ? 14. Then said all the trees unto the bramble, Come thou, and reign over us. 15. And the bramble said unto the trees, If in truth ye anoint me king over you, then come and put your trust in my shadow : and if not, let fire come out of the bramble, and devour the cedars of Lebanon.

Its application.—16. Now therefore, if ye have done truly and sincerely, in that ye have made Abimelech king, and if ye have dealt well with Jerubbaal and his house, and have done unto him according to the deserving of his hands ; 17. (for my father fought for you, and adventured his life far, and delivered you out of the hand of Midian : 18. and ye are risen up against my father's house this day, and have slain his sons, threescore and ten persons, upon one stone, and have made Abimelech, the son of his maidservant, king over the men of Shechem, because he is your brother;) 19. if ye then have dealt truly and sincerely with Jerubbaal and with his house this day, then rejoice ye in Abimelech, and let him also rejoice in you : 20. but if not, let fire come out from Abimelech, and devour the men of Shechem, and the house of Millo ; and let fire come out from the men of Shechem, and from the house of Millo, and devour Abimelech. 21. And Jotham ran away, and fled, and went to Beer, and dwelt there, for fear of Abimelech his brother.

15. This verse is explained by verse 20.

It proves a true prophecy.—22. When Abimelech had reigned three years over Israel, 23. then God sent an evil spirit between Abimelech and the men of Shechem ; and the men of Shechem dealt treacherously with Abimelech : 24. that the cruelty done to the threescore and ten sons of Jerubbaal might come, and their blood be laid upon Abimelech their brother, which slew them ; and upon the men of Shechem, which aided him in the killing of his brethren. 25. And the men of Shechem set liers in wait for him in the top of the mountains, and they robbed all that came along that way by them : and it was told Abimelech. 26. And Gaal the son of Ebed came with his brethren, and went over to Shechem : and the men of Shechem put their confidence in him. 27. And they went out into the fields, and gathered their vineyards, and trode the grapes, and made merry, and went into the house of their god, and did eat and drink, and cursed Abimelech.

[The text, here omitted for want of space, proceeds to relate the progress of the conspiracy against the usurper Abimelech, who, having retired to a neighbouring town, came down upon Shechem, took it by stratagem, razed it to the ground and crushed the bandits who held sway there.]

Abimelech's ignominious end.—50. Then went Abimelech to Thebez, and encamped against Thebez, and took it. 51. But there was a strong tower within the city, and thither fled all the men and women, and all they of the city, and shut it to them, and gat them up to the top of the

25. for him, *i.e.* “ to spite him,” “ to his damage.”

27. Perhaps Abimelech may be brought into line with the other Judges in the one respect of his military capacity as the repressor of the conspiracy at Shechem, which bears the aspect of an abortive attempt on the part of the local Canaanites to regain their former ascendancy.

50. Thebez was ten miles north-east of Shechem.

tower. 52. And Abimelech came unto the tower, and fought against it, and went hard unto the door of the tower to burn it with fire. 53. And a certain woman cast a piece of a millstone upon Abimelech's head, and all to brake his skull. 54. Then he called hastily unto the young man his armourbearer, and said unto him, Draw thy sword, and slay me, that men say not of me, A woman slew him. And his young man thrust him through, and he died. 55. And when the men of Israel saw that Abimelech was dead, they departed every man unto his place. 56. Thus God requited the wickedness of Abimelech, which he did unto his father, in slaying his seventy brethren : 57. and all the evil of the men of Shechem did God requite upon their heads : and upon them came the curse of Jotham the son of Jerubbaal.

JEPHTHAH AND THE AMMONITES: A TRANS-JORDANIC CAMPAIGN

Judges xi.—xii. 7

xi. 1. Now Jephthah the Gileadite was a mighty man of valour, and he was the son of an harlot : and Gilead begat Jephthah. 2. And Gilead's wife bare him sons ; and his wife's sons grew up, and they thrust out Jephthah, and said unto him, Thou shalt not inherit in our father's house ;

53. *all to.* “ To ” is a prefix meaning “ asunder ” ; “ all ”=“ altogether,” and is found often with a verb which is compounded with “ to.” Milton writes “ all-to-ruffled ” ; Bunyan, “ all-to-befooled.”

57. Of the next two Judges mentioned in our records no details are given : their names are **Tola** and **Jair** (x. 1-5).

xi. 1. Gilead is the district east of Jordan occupied by Gad and half Manasseh ; it is not the name of a man. The primitive language here employed means to tell us that the half-caste son of a harlot mother and Gileadite (Hebrew) father was disowned and dispossessed by the true-born members of his tribe.

for thou art the son of a strange woman. 3. Then Jephthah fled from his brethren, and dwelt in the land of Tob : and there were gathered vain men to Jephthah, and went out with him.

His penitent tribesmen implore his aid.—4. And it came to pass in process of time, that the children of Ammon made war against Israel. 5. And it was so, that when the children of Ammon made war against Israel, the elders of Gilead went to fetch Jephthah out of the land of Tob : 6. and they said unto Jephthah, Come, and be our captain, that we may fight with the children of Ammon. 7. And Jephthah said unto the elders of Gilead, Did not ye hate me, and expel me out of my father's house ? and why are ye come unto me now when ye are in distress ? 8. And the elders of Gilead said unto Jephthah, Therefore we turn again to thee now, that thou mayest go with us, and fight against the children of Ammon, and be our head over all the inhabitants of Gilead. 9. And Jephthah said unto the elders of Gilead, If ye bring me home again to fight against the children of Ammon, and the LORD deliver them before me, shall I be your head ? 10. And the elders of Gilead said unto Jephthah, The LORD be witness between us, if we do not so according to thy words. 11. Then Jephthah went with the elders of Gilead, and the people made him head and captain over them : and Jephthah uttered all his words before the LORD in Mizpeh.

A fruitless diplomatic discussion.—12. And Jephthah sent messengers unto the king of the children of Ammon,

3. *Tob.* In Syria, to the north-east of Gilead.

vain men = a band of freebooters.

11. *Mizpeh* is Jephthah's home on the northern borders of Gad. He is here represented as repeating solemnly the terms of agreement between himself and the Gileadites " before the Lord," *i.e.* at some sanctuary or altar at Mizpeh.

saying, What hast thou to do with me, that thou art come against me to fight in my land ? 13. And the king of the children of Ammon answered unto the messengers of Jephthah, Because Israel took away my land, when they came up out of Egypt, from Arnon even unto Jabbok, and unto Jordan : now therefore restore those lands again peaceably. 14. And Jephthah sent messengers again unto the king of the children of Ammon : 15. and said unto him, Thus saith Jephthah, Israel took not away the land of Moab, nor the land of the children of Ammon : 27. wherefore I have not sinned against thee, but thou doest me wrong to war against me : the LORD the Judge be judge this day between the children of Israel and the children of Ammon. 28. Howbeit the king of the children of Ammon hearkened not unto the words of Jephthah which he sent him.

Jephthah's barbarous vow.—29. Then the Spirit of the LORD came upon Jephthah, and he passed over Gilead, and Manasseh, and passed over Mizpeh of Gilead, and from Mizpeh of Gilead he passed over unto the children of Ammon. 30. And Jephthah vowed a vow unto the LORD, and said, If thou shalt without fail deliver the children of Ammon into mine hands, 31. then it shall be, that whatsoever cometh forth of the doors of my house to meet me, when I return in peace from the children of Ammon, shall surely be the LORD's, and I will offer it up for a burnt offering.

His victory.—32. So Jephthah passed over unto the

15. In the late interpolated passage which follows (here omitted) Jephthah explains that it was Sihon, the Amorite king, whom Moses had ejected from these parts : Sihon may himself have been originally a usurper of Ammonite territory, but it was now Israel's by fair conquest from him, and not from Ammon.

children of Ammon to fight against them : and the LORD delivered them into his hands. 33. And he smote them from Aroer, even till thou come to Minnith, even twenty cities, and unto the plain of the vineyards, with a very great slaughter. Thus the children of Ammon were subdued before the children of Israel.

His daughter's sacrifice.—34. And Jephthah came to Mizpeh unto his house, and, behold, his daughter came out to meet him with timbrels and with dances : and she was his only child ; beside her he had neither son nor daughter. 35. And it came to pass, when he saw her, that he rent his clothes, and said, Alas, my daughter ! thou hast brought me very low, and thou art one of them that trouble me : for I have opened my mouth unto the LORD, and I cannot go back. 36. And she said unto him, My father, if thou hast opened thy mouth unto the LORD, do to me according to that which hath proceeded out of thy mouth ; forasmuch as the LORD hath taken vengeance for thee of thine enemies, even of the children of Ammon. 37. And she said unto her father, Let this thing be done for me : let me alone two months, that I may go up and down upon the mountains, and bewail my virginity, I and my fellows. 38. And he said, Go. And he sent her away for two months : and she went with her companions, and bewailed her virginity upon the mountains. 39. And it came to pass at the end of two months, that she returned unto her father, who did with her according to his vow which he had vowed :

33. **Aroer.** On the river Arnon, east of the Dead Sea.

34. Jephthah's daughter ; see Tennyson's *Dream of Fair Women*. See also Appendix IV. and *cf.* the story of Iphigeneia.

39. did ~~with her~~ : *i.e.* he sacrificed her as a burnt offering.

and she knew no man. And it was a custom in Israel, 40. that the daughters of Israel went yearly to lament the daughter of Jephthah the Gileadite four days in a year.

A repetition of Ephraimite jealousy, but not met by a repetition of Gideon's conciliatory tones.—xii. 1. And the men of Ephraim gathered themselves together, and went northward, and said unto Jephthah, Wherefore passedst thou over to fight against the children of Ammon, and didst not call us to go with thee? we will burn thine house upon thee with fire. 2. And Jephthah said unto them, I and my people were at great strife with the children of Ammon; and when I called you, ye delivered me not out of their hands. 3. And when I saw that ye delivered me not, I put my life in my hands, and passed over against the children of Ammon, and the LORD delivered them into my hand: wherefore then are ye come up unto me this day, to fight against me? 4. Then Jephthah gathered together all the men of Gilead, and fought with Ephraim: and the men of Gilead smote Ephraim, because they said, Ye Gileadites are fugitives of Ephraim among the Ephraimites, and among the Manassites. 5. And the Gileadites took the passages of Jordan before the Ephraimites: and it was so, that when those Ephraimites which were escaped said, Let me go over; that the men of Gilead said unto him, Art thou an Ephraimite? If he said, Nay; 6. then said they unto him, Say now

4. The Ephraimites taunt the Gileadites, saying, " You are not a tribe, but a runagate crew living on sufferance in the borders of Ephraim and Manasseh." But the text is hopelessly corrupt here.

5. over, *i.e.* back from the east side of Jordan to their homes on the west side.

Shibboleth: and he said Sibboleth: for he could not frame to pronounce it right. Then they took him, and slew him at the passages of Jordan: and there fell at that time of the Ephraimites forty and two thousand. 7. And Jephthah judged Israel six years. Then died Jephthah the Gileadite, and was buried in one of the cities of Gilead.

SAMSON AND THE PHILISTINES

Judges xiii.-xvi

xiii. 1. And the children of Israel did evil again in the sight of the LORD; and the LORD delivered them into the hand of the Philistines forty years. 2. And there was a certain man of Zorah, of the family of the Danites, whose name was Manoah; and his wife was barren, and bare not. 3. And the angel of the LORD appeared unto the woman, and said unto her, Behold now, thou art barren, and bearest not: but thou shalt conceive, and bear a son. 4. Now therefore beware, I pray thee, and drink not wine nor strong drink, and eat not any unclean thing: 5. for, lo, thou shalt conceive, and bear a son; and no razor shall come on his head: for the child shall

7. Three other judges—Ibzan, Elon, and Abdon—are mentioned without comment in our text at this point.

xiii. 1. **Philistines.** See above, p. 104. Their pentapolis consisted of Gaza, Gath, Ekron, Ashdod, and Ashkelon.

2. **Zorah**, a town of Dan, on the border of Judah. A whole cycle of narratives gradually grew around the name of Samson, the Hebrew Hercules, in parts of which there is a romantic element "scarcely consistent with sober history." But the nucleus of the records is of great antiquity, and fragments of poetry, as in xiv. 18, xv. 16, point to early authorities. "In Heb. xi. 32 his faith is referred to, and it is noteworthy that this wild, self-willed man, ruined by his passions, kept a Nazarite's vow inviolate, prayed, and believed that in God was his strength" (H. Maynard Smith in *Murray's I.B.D.*).

be a Nazarite unto God from the womb: and he shall begin to deliver Israel out of the hand of the Philistines.

6. Then the woman came and told her husband, saying, A man of God came unto me, and his countenance was like the countenance of an angel of God, very terrible: but I asked him not whence he was, neither told he me his name: 7. but he said unto me, Behold, thou shalt conceive, and bear a son; and now drink no wine nor strong drink, neither eat any unclean thing; for the child shall be a Nazarite to God from the womb to the day of his death.

The theophany is repeated to Manoah.—8. Then Manoah intreated the LORD, and said, O my Lord, let the man of God which thou didst send come again unto us, and teach us what we shall do unto the child that shall be born. 9. And God hearkened to the voice of Manoah; and the angel of God came again unto the woman as she sat in the field: but Manoah her husband was not with her. 10. And the woman made haste, and ran, and shewed her husband, and said unto him, Behold, the man hath appeared unto me, that came unto me the other day. 11. And Manoah arose, and went after his wife, and came to the man, and said unto him, Art thou the man that spakest unto the woman? And he said, I am. 12. And Manoah said, Now let thy words come to pass. How shall we order the child, and how shall we do

5. **Nazarites**—the “separated” ones—undertook three vows: the growing of the hair, abstinence from all produce of the grape, avoidance of pollution by contact with the dead. The vow was either perpetual or for a short period. Other Nazarites in Biblical history are Samuel and John Baptist. “Nazaritism seems to have been the outcome of a reaction against the disastrous influence which Canaanitish heathenism had exercised upon Hebrew religion. The Nazarites endeavoured by an example of asceticism to restore the austere simplicity of faith and manners which Israel had learned in the wilderness” (Ott. 116). See Num. vi.

unto him? 13. And the angel of the LORD said unto Manoah, Of all that I said unto the woman let her beware. 14. She may not eat of any thing that cometh of the vine, neither let her drink wine or strong drink, nor eat any unclean thing: all that I commanded her let her observe.

The angel 'did wonderfully.'—15. And Manoah said unto the angel of the LORD, I pray thee, let us detain thee, until we shall have made ready a kid for thee. 16. And the angel of the LORD said unto Manoah, Though thou detain me, I will not eat of thy bread: and if thou wilt offer a burnt offering, thou must offer it unto the LORD. For Manoah knew not that he was an angel of the LORD. 17. And Manoah said unto the angel of the LORD, What is thy name, that when thy sayings come to pass we may do thee honour? 18. And the angel of the LORD said unto him, Why askest thou thus after my name, seeing it is secret? 19. So Manoah took a kid with a meat offering, and offered it upon a rock unto the LORD; and the angel did wonderfully; and Manoah and his wife looked on. 20. For it came to pass, when the flame went up toward heaven from off the altar, that the angel of the LORD ascended in the flame of the altar: And Manoah and his wife looked on it, and fell on their faces to the ground. 21. But the angel of the LORD did no more appear to Manoah and to his wife. Then Manoah knew that he was an angel of the LORD. 22. And Manoah said unto his wife, We shall surely die, because we have seen God. 23. But his wife said unto him, If the LORD were pleased to kill us, he would not have received a burnt offering and a meat offering at our hands, neither would he have shewed us all these things, nor would as at this time have told us such things as these.

24. And the woman bare a son, and called his name Samson : and the child grew, and the LORD blessed him. 25. And the Spirit of the LORD began to move him at times in the camp of Dan between Zorah and Eshtaol.

Samson's marriage.—xiv. 1. And Samson went down to Timnath, and saw a woman in Timnath of the daughters of the Philistines. 2. And he came up, and told his father and his mother, and said, I have seen a woman in Timnath of the daughters of the Philistines : now therefore get her for me to wife. 3. Then his father and his mother said unto him, Is there never a woman among the daughters of thy brethren, or among all my people, that thou goest to take a wife of the uncircumcised Philistines ? And Samson said unto his father, Get her for me ; for she pleaseth me well. 4. But his father and his mother knew not that it was of the LORD, that he sought an occasion against the Philistines : for at that time the Philistines had dominion over Israel.

5. Then went Samson down, and his father and his mother, to Timnath, and came to the vineyards of Timnath : and, behold, a young lion roared against him. 6. And the Spirit of the LORD came mightily upon him, and he rent him as he would have rent a kid, and he had nothing in his hand : but he told not his father or his mother what he had done. 7. And he went down, and talked with the woman ; and she pleased Samson well. 8. And after a time he returned to take her, and he turned aside to see the carcase of the lion : and, behold, there was a swarm of bees and honey in the carcase of the lion.

xiv. 1. Samson entered into a form of marriage with the Philistine woman, called "Sadiqa marriage," whereby the woman remains at her own home.

9. And he took thereof in his hands, and went on eating, and came to his father and mother, and he gave them, and they did eat: but he told not them that he had taken the honey out of the carcase of the lion. 10. So his father went down unto the woman: and Samson made there a feast; for so used the young men to do. 11. And it came to pass, when they saw him, that they brought thirty companions to be with him.

12. And Samson said unto them, I will now put forth a riddle unto you: if ye can certainly declare it me within the seven days of the feast, and find it out, then I will give you thirty sheets and thirty change of garments: 13. but if ye cannot declare it me, then shall ye give me thirty sheets and thirty change of garments. And they said unto him, Put forth thy riddle, that we may hear it.

14. And he said unto them,

“Out of the eater came forth meat,
And out of the strong came forth sweetness.”

And they could not in three days expound the riddle.

15. And it came to pass on the *fourth* day, that they said unto Samson's wife, Entice thy husband, that he may declare unto us the riddle; lest we burn thee and thy father's house with fire: have ye called us to take that we have? is it not so? 16. And Samson's wife wept before him, and said, Thou dost but hate me, and lovest me not: thou hast put forth a riddle unto the children of my people, and hast not told it me. And he

11. *saw him*, *i.e.* saw what a dangerous-looking person he was. They brought these thirty to act as “special constables.” But, as verse 15 shows, originally the story simply ran that Samson invited the thirty as his guests. The account has become garbled.

15. *have ye called*, *i.e.* have you invited us here to impoverish us by robbing us of our garments?

said unto her, Behold, I have not told it my father nor my mother, and shall I tell it thee ? 17. And she wept before him the seven days, while their feast lasted : and it came to pass on the seventh day, that he told her, because she pressed him sore : and she told the riddle to the children of her people. 18. And the men of the city said unto him on the seventh day before the sun went down, What is sweeter than honey ? and what is stronger than a lion ? And he said unto them,

“ If ye had not plowed with my heifer,
Ye had not found out my riddle.”

19. And the Spirit of the LORD came upon him, and he went down to Ashkelon, and slew thirty men of them, and took their spoil, and gave change of garments unto them which expounded the riddle. And his anger was kindled, and he went up to his father’s house. 20. But Samson’s wife was given to his companion, whom he had used as his friend.

Exploits among the Philistines.—xv. 1. But it came to pass within a while after, in the time of wheat harvest, that Samson visited his wife with a kid ; and he said, I will go in to my wife into the chamber. But her father would not suffer him to go in. 2. And her father said, I verily thought that thou hadst utterly hated her ; therefore I gave her to thy companion : is not her younger sister fairer than she ? take her, I pray thee, instead of her.

3. And Samson said concerning them, Now shall I be more blameless than the Philistines, though I do them a

17. the seven days, *i.e.* the rest of the seven days.

20. his friend. Like our “ best man.” Milton calls him “ the paranympth ” in *Samson Agonistes*, which gives a happy picture of the characters both of Samson and of Delilah, his later love.

displeasure. 4. And Samson went and caught three hundred foxes, and took firebrands, and turned tail to tail, and put a firebrand in the midst between two tails. 5. And when he had set the brands on fire, he let them go into the standing corn of the Philistines, and burnt up both the shocks, and also the standing corn, with the vineyards and olives. 6. Then the Philistines said, Who hath done this ? And they answered, Samson, the son in law of the Timnite, because he had taken his wife, and given her to his companion. And the Philistines came up, and burnt her and her father with fire.

7. And Samson said unto them, Though ye have done this, yet will I be avenged of you, and after that I will cease. 8. And he smote them hip and thigh with a great slaughter : and he went down and dwelt in the top of the rock Etam.

9. Then the Philistines went up, and pitched in Judah, and spread themselves in Lehi. 10. And the men of Judah said, Why are ye come up against us ? And they answered, To bind Samson are we come up, to do to him as he hath done to us. 11. Then three thousand men of Judah went to the top of the rock Etam, and said to Samson, Knowest thou not that the Philistines are rulers over us ? What is this that thou hast done unto us ? And he said unto them, As they did unto me, so have I done unto them. 12. And they said unto him, We are come down to bind thee, that we may deliver thee into the hand of the Philistines. And Samson said unto them, Swear unto me, that ye will not fall upon me yourselves. 13. And they spake unto him, saying, No ; but

4. Ovid, in the *Fasti*, lib. iv., tells a similar story to this, and gives his explanation of it.

we will bind thee fast, and deliver thee into their hand : but surely we will not kill thee. And they bound him with two new cords, and brought him up from the rock.

14. And when he came unto Lehi, the Philistines shouted against him : and the Spirit of the LORD came mightily upon him, and the cords that were upon his arms became as flax that was burnt with fire, and his bands loosed from off his hands. 15. And he found a new jawbone of an ass, and put forth his hand, and took it, and slew a thousand men therewith. 16. And Samson said,

“ With the jawbone of an ass, heaps upon heaps,
With the jaw of an ass have I slain a thousand men.”

17. And it came to pass, when he had made an end of speaking, that he cast away the jawbone out of his hand, and called that place Ramath-lehi.

18. And he was sore athirst, and called on the LORD, and said, Thou hast given this great deliverance into the hand of thy servant : and now shall I die for thirst, and fall into the hand of the uncircumcised ? 19. But God clave an hollow place that was in the jaw, and there came water thereout ; and when he had drunk, his spirit came again, and he revived : wherefore he called the name thereof En-hakkore, which is in Lehi unto this day. 20. And he judged Israel in the days of the Philistines twenty years.

xvi. 1. Then went Samson to Gaza, and saw there an harlot, and went in unto her. 2. And it was told the Gazites, saying, Samson is come hither. And they [com-

17. Ramath-lehi = The Hill of the Jawbone (Lehi).

19. En-hakkore = The Spring of him that called.

xvi. 2. The words in brackets are obviously a later addition, and make the story unintelligible. How could Samson have carried off

passed him in, and laid wait for him all night in the gate of the city, and] were quiet all the night, saying, In the morning, when it is day, we shall kill him. 3. And Samson lay till midnight, and arose at midnight, and took the doors of the gate of the city, and the two posts, and went away with them, bar and all, and put them upon his shoulders, and carried them up to the top of an hill that is before Hebron.

Attempts against his liberty.—4. And it came to pass afterward, that he loved a woman in the valley of Sorek, whose name was Delilah. 5. And the lords of the Philistines came up unto her, and said unto her, Entice him, and see wherein his great strength lieth, and by what means we may prevail against him, that we may bind him to afflict him: and we will give thee every one of us eleven hundred pieces of silver.

6. And Delilah said to Samson, Tell me, I pray thee, wherein thy great strength lieth, and wherewith thou mightest be bound to afflict thee. 7. And Samson said unto her, If they bind me with seven green withs that were never dried, then shall I be weak, and be as another man. 8. Then the lords of the Philistines brought up to him seven green withs which had not been dried, and she bound him with them. 9. Now there were men lying in wait, abiding with her in the chamber. And she said

the gates unmolested if the enemy were picketed there to stop him? If the picket was asleep surely the author would have hinted at this; and "what sound sleepers they must have been!" (see Moore, *ad loc.*).

3. He pulled the posts out of the ground, and carried off in one piece the doors, the posts, the bar running across, and the whole framework and took them all the way to Hebron.

5. lords, *i.e.* the five "tyrants" (in the Greek sense) who ruled over the five chief Philistine cities.

7. green withs (or osiers); better, "seven new bow-strings."

unto him, The Philistines be upon thee, Samson. And he brake the withs, as a thread of tow is broken when it toucheth the fire. So his strength was not known. 10. And Delilah said unto Samson, Behold, thou hast mocked me, and told me lies : now tell me, I pray thee, wherewith thou mightest be bound. 11. And he said unto her, If they bind me fast with new ropes that never were occupied, then shall I be weak, and be as another man. 12. Delilah therefore took new ropes, and bound him therewith, and said unto him, The Philistines be upon thee, Samson. And there were liers in wait abiding in the chamber. And he brake them from off his arms like a thread. 13. And Delilah said unto Samson, Hitherto thou hast mocked me, and told me lies : tell me wherewith thou mightest be bound. And he said unto her, If thou weavest the seven locks of my head with the web. 14. And she fastened it with the pin, and said unto him, The Philistines be upon thee, Samson. And he awaked out of his sleep, and went away with the *loom*, and with the web.

Delilah proves his ruin.—15. And she said unto him, How canst thou say, I love thee, when thine heart is not with me ? thou hast mocked me these three times, and hast not told me wherein thy great strength lieth. 16. And it came to pass, when she pressed him daily with her words, and urged him, so that his soul was vexed unto death ; 17. that he told her all his heart, and said unto her, There hath not come a razor upon mine head ; for I have been a Nazarite unto God from my mother's womb : if I be

13. She wove his hair in with the threads with which she was making cloth on her loom, and beat them up tight with the *σπάθη*, or rod (not "pin") which was used to make the threads lie close together and form a firm texture. On wakening he carried off web and loom with its posts and all hanging in his hair.

shaven, then my strength will go from me, and I shall become weak, and be like any other man. 18. And when Delilah saw that he had told her all his heart, she sent and called for the lords of the Philistines, saying, Come up this once, for he hath shewed me all his heart. Then the lords of the Philistines came up unto her, and brought money in their hand. 19. And she made him sleep upon her knees ; and she called for a man, and she caused him to shave off the seven locks of his head ; and she began to afflict him, and his strength went from him. 20. And she said, The Philistines be upon thee, Samson. And he awoke out of his sleep, and said, I will go out as at other times before, and shake myself. And he wist not that the LORD was departed from him.

He is blinded.—21. But the Philistines took him, and put out his eyes, and brought him down to Gaza, and bound him with fetters of brass ; and he did grind in the prison house. 22. Howbeit the hair of his head began to grow again after he was shaven. 23. Then the lords of the Philistines gathered them together for to offer a great sacrifice unto Dagon their god, and to rejoice : for they said, Our god hath delivered Samson our enemy into our hand. 24. And when the people saw him, they praised their god : for they said, Our god hath delivered into our hands our enemy, and the destroyer of our country, which slew many of us. 25. And it came to pass, when their hearts were merry, that they said, Call for Samson, that he may make

21. To grind at the mill (hand-mill) was an indignity for a free man. Only women and slaves did it.

23. **Dagon** was worshipped by all the Philistines (*cf.* 1 Sam. v.). Nothing is *known* of him apart from these passages, though various theorists have connected him with a fish, with agriculture, and with Babylonia.

us sport. And they called for Samson out of the prison house ; and he made them sport : and they set him between the pillars. 26. And Samson said unto the lad that held him by the hand, Suffer me that I may feel the pillars whereupon the house standeth, that I may lean upon them.

His death.—27. Now the house was full of men and women ; and all the lords of the Philistines were there ; and there were upon the roof about three thousand men and women, that beheld while Samson made sport. 28. And Samson called unto the **LORD**, and said, O Lord God, remember me, I pray thee, and strengthen me, I pray thee, only this once, O God, that I may be at once avenged of the Philistines for my two eyes. 29. And Samson took hold of the two middle pillars upon which the house stood, and on which it was borne up, of the one with his right hand, and of the other with his left. 30. And Samson said, Let me die with the Philistines. And he bowed himself with all his might ; and the house fell upon the lords, and upon all the people that were therein. So the dead which he slew at his death were more than they which he slew in his life. 31. Then his brethren and all the house of his father came down, and took him, and brought him up, and buried him between Zorah and Eshtaol in the buryingplace of Manoah his father. And he judged Israel twenty years.

MICAH AND THE DANITES

Judges xvii., xviii

Here we have two stories, (1) one relating a piece of superstitious idolatry on the part of an Ephraimite and a priest, who set up a domestic shrine in disregard of the sanctuary at Shiloh. This serves as a preface to (2) an account of the transmigration to the north of part of

Dan, who found the territory allotted them on the maritime plain north-west of Judah too narrow and uncomfortable for them under the pressure of the Philistines. There is a quiet humour in the way in which the narrator exposes Micah and his Levite.

Micah had robbed his mother.—xvii. 1. And there was a man of mount Ephraim, whose name was Micah. 2. And he said unto his mother, The eleven hundred shekels of silver that were taken from thee, about which thou cursedst, and spakest of also in mine ears, behold, the silver is with me ; I took it. 3 *b.* Now therefore I will restore it unto thee. 2 *b.* And his mother said, Blessed be thou of the LORD, my son. 4 *a.* So he restored the money unto his mother. 3. And when he had restored the eleven hundred shekels of silver to his mother, his mother said, I had wholly dedicated the silver unto the LORD from my hand for my son, to make a graven image and a molten image. 4 *b.* And his mother took two hundred shekels of silver, and gave them to the founder, who made thereof a graven image and a molten image : and they were in the house of Micah. 5. And the man Micah had an house of gods, and made an ephod, and teraphim, and consecrated one of his sons, who became his priest. 6. In those days there

4 *b.* two hundred shekels What did she do with the other 900 ? Theories are that, like Ananias and Sapphira, she kept back part through avarice ; that 200 shekels were the wages of the artist, and the rest was made into the image ; etc., etc. Moore thinks she did not vow to use the whole 1,100 for an image at all, but only put them under a taboo until she herself had made an image of Jehovah with part of the silver. But can the text bear this interpretation ?

5. *ephod*, is either a garment, like Aaron's (p. 44), or an image, like Gideon's (p. 159). *teraphim* were small images used for divining. The graven image and the molten image were probably one and the same thing—a molten image engraved.

was no king in Israel, but every man did that which was right in his own eyes.

Instead of his son he installs a Levite as his priest.—7.
 And there was a young man out of Beth-lehem-judah of the family of Judah, who was a Levite, and he sojourned there. 8. And the man departed out of the city from Beth-lehem-judah to sojourn where he could find a place: and he came to mount Ephraim to the house of Micah, as he journeyed. 9. And Micah said unto him, Whence comest thou? And he said unto him, I am a Levite of Beth-lehem-judah, and I go to sojourn where I may find a place. 10. And Micah said unto him, Dwell with me, and be unto me a father and a priest, and I will give thee ten shekels of silver by the year, and a suit of apparel, and thy victuals. So the Levite went in. 11. And the Levite was content to dwell with the man; and the young man was unto him as one of his sons. 12. And Micah consecrated the Levite; and the young man became his priest, and was in the house of Micah. 13. Then said Micah, Now know I that the LORD will do me good, seeing I have a Levite to my priest.

Arrival of Danite scouts.—xviii. 1. In those days there was no king in Israel: and in those days the tribe of the Danites sought them an inheritance to dwell in; for unto that day all their inheritance had not fallen unto them among the tribes of Israel. 2. And the children of Dan sent of their family five men from their coasts, men of valour, from Zorah, and from Eshtaol, to spy out the land, and to search it; and they said unto them,

1. In Josh. xix. it is stated that the Danites found the territory assigned to them by Joshua too small, therefore they migrated north, to Laish, as is described in this chapter, and thus at last did come into “*all* their inheritance.”

Go, search the land: who when they came to mount Ephraim, to the house of Micah, they lodged there. 3. When they were by the house of Micah, they knew the voice of the young man the Levite: and they turned in thither, and said unto him, Who brought thee hither? and what makest thou in this place? and what hast thou here? 4. And he said unto them, Thus and thus dealeth Micah with me, and hath hired me, and I am his priest. 5. And they said unto him, Ask counsel, we pray thee, of God, that we may know whether our way which we go shall be prosperous. 6. And the priest said unto them, Go in peace: before the LORD is your way wherein ye go.

Their report.—7. Then the five men departed, and came to Laish, and saw the people that were therein, how they dwelt careless, after the manner of the Zidonians, quiet and secure; and there was no magistrate in the land, that might put them to shame in any thing; and they were far from the Zidonians, and had no business with any man. 8. And they came unto their brethren to Zorah and Eshtaol: and their brethren said unto them, What say ye? 9. And they said, Arise, that we may go up against them: for we have seen the land, and, behold, it is very good: and are ye still? be not slothful to go, and to enter to possess the land. 10. When ye go, ye shall come unto a people secure, and to a large land: for God hath given it into your hands; a place where there is no want of any thing that is in the earth.

Migration of the Danites.—11. And there went from thence of the family of the Danites, out of Zorah and out

7. *Laish.* At the foot of Mount Hermon.

of Eshtaol, six hundred men appointed with weapons of war. 12. And they went up, and pitched in Kirjath-jearim, in Judah: wherefore they called that place Mahaneh-dan unto this day: behold, it is behind Kirjath-jearim. 13. And they passed thence unto mount Ephraim, and came unto the house of Micah.

They plunder Micah's shrine.—14. Then answered the five men that went to spy out the country of Laish, and said unto their brethren, Do ye know that there is in these houses an ephod, and teraphim, and a graven image, and a molten image? now therefore consider what ye have to do. 15. And they turned thitherward, and came to the house of the young man the Levite, even unto the house of Micah, and saluted him. 16. And the six hundred men appointed with their weapons of war, which were of the children of Dan, stood by the entering of the gate. 17. And the five men that went to spy out the land went up, and came in thither, and took the graven image, and the ephod, and the teraphim, and the molten image: and the priest stood in the entering of the gate with the six hundred men that were appointed with weapons of war. 18. And these went into Micah's house, and fetched the carved image, the ephod, and the teraphim, and the molten image. Then said the priest unto them, What do ye? 19. And they said unto him, Hold thy peace, lay thine hand upon thy mouth, and go with us, and be to us a father and a priest: is it better for thee to be a priest unto the house of one man, or that thou be a priest unto a tribe and a family in Israel? 20. And the priest's heart was glad, and he took the ephod, and the teraphim, and the graven image, and went in the midst of the people. 21. So

12. *Mahaneh-dan* = *Dan's camp*.

they turned and departed, and put the little ones and the cattle and the carriage before them.—

22. And when they were a good way from the house of Micah, the men that were in the houses near to Micah's house were gathered together, and overtook the children of Dan. 23. And they cried unto the children of Dan. And they turned their faces, and said unto Micah, What aileth thee, that thou comest with such a company? 24. And he said, Ye have taken away my gods which I made, and the priest, and ye are gone away: and what have I more? and what is this that ye say unto me, What aileth thee? 25. And the children of Dan said unto him, Let not thy voice be heard among us, lest angry fellows run upon thee, and thou lose thy life, with the lives of thy household.

They settle at Laish.—26. And the children of Dan went their way: and when Micah saw that they were too strong for him, he turned and went back unto his house. 27. And they took the things which Micah had made, and the priest which he had, and came unto Laish, unto a people that were at quiet and secure: and they smote them with the edge of the sword, and burnt the city with fire. 28. And there was no deliverer, because it was far from Zidon, and they had no business with any man; and it was in the valley that lieth by Beth-rehob. And they built a city, and dwelt therein. 29. And they called the name of the city Dan, after the name of Dan their father, who was born unto Israel: howbeit the name of the city was Laish at the first.

30. And the children of Dan set up the graven image: and Jonathan, the son of Gershom, the son of *Moses*, he

21. carriage is seventeenth-century English for baggage, "the thing carried"; here it means "their wealth."

30. Moses is the correct reading. Later Jews, out of respect

and his sons were priests to the tribe of Dan until the day of the captivity of the land. 31. And they set them up Micah's graven image, which he made, all the time that the house of God was in Shiloh.

THE TRIBAL WAR AGAINST THE BENJAMITES

Judges xix.-xxi

There are three main incidents in this narrative. 1. A Levite's concubine dies under the ill-usage she has suffered from certain "sons of Belial" in Gibeah (not Geba) of Benjamin. 2. All Israel musters in indignation and makes war on Benjamin. At first Benjamin successfully defends itself in two battles; in the third all the Benjamites are utterly wiped out except 600 men, and Gibeah is burnt. 3. Two methods are adopted for supplying this remnant with wives.

Difficulties of the text. There are inconsistencies arising from an imperfect combination of two or more parallel documents: the numbers given are incredibly large, the Israelite army mustering 400,000 men, whereas Debōrah puts the total available force at 40,000 (v. 8); we cannot find any hint in the other historical accounts of this period (Joshua, Judges, Samuel, etc.) that Benjamin had been reduced almost to annihilation.

The story, parts of which are here printed, was intended to give an *ideal*, not an actual, representation of a united community of all Israel acting harmoniously to give effect

for the lawgiver, inserted an "n" above the line, and read "Manasseh," which is kept in A.V.

30. *day of the captivity* is explained by next verse, and means "until the Philistines captured the Ark, in Eli's time." It does not mean "until the fall of the Northern Kingdom," 722 B.C.

to the dictates of morality. Yet the story must certainly have been based on actual historical facts which have become exaggerated. Perhaps it was the tribe of Judah, to which the murdered woman belonged, that really inflicted the punishment on Benjamin. The sources are ancient and all the narrative is pre-Exilic. (Dr. L.O.T., 159 *seq.* ; and for a full discussion see Moore, *Judges*, pp. 402 *seq.* ; Hastings' *D.B.*, " Benjamin.")

xix. 1. And it came to pass in those days, when there was no king in Israel, that there was a certain Levite sojourning on the side of mount Ephraim, who took to him a concubine out of Beth-lehem-judah. 2. And his concubine played the harlot against him, and went away from him unto her father's house to Beth-lehem-judah, and was there four whole months. 3. And her husband arose, and went after her, to speak friendly unto her, and to bring her again, having his servant with him, and a couple of asses : and she brought him into her father's house : and when the father of the damsel saw him, he rejoiced to meet him. 4. And his father in law, the damsel's father, retained him ; and he abode with him three days : so they did eat and drink, and lodged there.

His father-in-law's hospitality.—5. And it came to pass on the fourth day, when they arose early in the morning, that he rose up to depart : and the damsel's father said unto his son in law, Comfort thine heart with a morsel of bread, and afterward go your way. 6. And they sat down, and did eat and drink both of them together : for the damsel's father had said unto the man, Be content, I pray thee, and tarry all night, and let thine heart be merry. 7. And when the man rose up to depart, his

father in law urged him: therefore he lodged there again. 8. And he arose early in the morning on the fifth day to depart: and the damsels' father said, Comfort thine heart, I pray thee. And they tarried until afternoon, and they did eat both of them. 9. And when the man rose up to depart, he, and his concubine, and his servant, his father in law, the damsels' father, said unto him, Behold, now the day draweth toward evening, I pray you tarry all night: behold, the day groweth to an end, lodge here, that thine heart may be merry; and to morrow get you early on your way, that thou mayest go home.

10. But the man would not tarry that night, but he rose up and departed, and came over against Jebus, which is Jerusalem; and there were with him two asses saddled, his concubine also was with him. 11. And when they were by Jebus, the day was far spent; and the servant said unto his master, Come, I pray thee, and let us turn into this city of the Jebusites, and lodge in it. 12. And his master said unto him, We will not turn aside hither into the city of a stranger, that is not of the children of Israel; we will pass over to Gibeah. 13. And he said unto his servant, Come, and let us draw near to one of these places to lodge all night, in Gibeah, or in Ramah. 14. And they passed on and went their way; and the sun went down upon them when they were by Gibeah, which belongeth to Benjamin. 15. And they turned aside thither, to go in and to lodge in Gibeah: and when he went in, he

10. Jerusalem had only been partially conquered by Judah (and Benjamin).

12. Gibeah—the future home of Saul—is shown by this context not to be the same place as Geba, near Michmash. It is south of Ramah, on the way from Jerusalem to Ramah.

sat him down in a street of the city : for there was no man that took them into his house to lodging.

An old man's kindness to the strangers.—16. And, behold, there came an old man from his work out of the field at even, which was also of mount Ephraim ; and he sojourned in Gibeah : but the men of the place were Benjamites. 17. And when he had lifted up his eyes, he saw a way-faring man in the street of the city : and the old man said, Whither goest thou ? and whence comest thou ? 18. And he said unto him, We are passing from Beth-lehem-judah toward the side of mount Ephraim ; from thence am I : and I went to Beth-lehem-judah, but I am now going to the house of the **LORD** ; and there is no man that receiveth me to house. 19. Yet there is both straw and provender for our asses ; and there is bread and wine also for me, and for thy handmaid, and for the young man which is with thy servants : there is no want of any thing. 20. And the old man said, Peace be with thee ; howsoever let all thy wants lie upon me ; only lodge not in the street. 21. So he brought him into his house, and gave provender unto the asses : and they washed their feet, and did eat and drink.

Violence of the rioters.—22. Now as they were making their hearts merry, behold, the men of the city, certain sons of Belial, beset the house round about, and beat at the door, and [treated the woman with such violence that she died]. 28 b. Then the man took her up upon an ass, and the man rose up, and gat him unto his place.

18. **to the house of the Lord.** This can only mean “ to Shiloh ” : but the man was returning to his home somewhere in Mt. Ephraim, not to Shiloh ; and the LXX is probably right in reading “ and I am going to my home.”

22. **Belial** is not a proper noun. It means worthlessness ; so “ sons of Belial ” = worthless fellows.

29. And when he was come into his house, he took a knife, and laid hold on his concubine, and divided her, together with her bones, into twelve pieces, and sent her into all the coasts of Israel. 30. And it was so, that all that saw it said, There was no such deed done nor seen from the day that the children of Israel came up out of the land of Egypt unto this day: consider of it, take advice, and speak your minds.

Massing of all Israel.—xx. 1. Then all the children of Israel went out, and the congregation was gathered together as one man, from Dan even to Beer-sheba, with the land of Gilead, unto the LORD in Mizpeh. 2. And the chief of all the people, even of all the tribes of Israel, presented themselves in the assembly of the people of God, four hundred thousand footmen that drew sword. 11. So all the men of Israel were gathered against the city, knit together as one man. 12. And the tribes of Israel sent men through all the tribe of Benjamin, saying, What wickedness is this that is done among you? 13. Now therefore deliver us the men, the children of Belial, which are in Gibeah, that we may put them to death, and put away evil from Israel. But the children of Benjamin would not hearken to the voice of their brethren the children of Israel: 14. but the children of Benjamin gathered themselves together out of the cities unto Gibeah, to go out to battle against the children of Israel. [Here follows an account of the battles of Israel against the “left-handed” men of Benjamin, who were almost entirely exterminated as the result.]

Regret for the destitution of Benjamin after the fight.—xxi. 1. Now the men of Israel had sworn in Mizpeh, saying, There shall not any of us give his daughter unto Benjamin

to wife. 2. And the people came to the house of God, and abode there till even before God, and lifted up their voices, and wept sore ; 3. and said, O LORD God of Israel, why is this come to pass in Israel, that there should be to day one tribe lacking in Israel ? 4. And it came to pass on the Morrow, that the people rose early, and built there an altar, and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings. 5. And the children of Israel said, Who is there among all the tribes of Israel that came not up with the congregation unto the LORD ? For they had made a great oath concerning him that came not up to the LORD in Mizpeh, saying, He shall surely be put to death. 6. And the children of Israel repented them for Benjamin their brother, and said, There is one tribe cut off from Israel this day. 7. How shall we do for wives for them that remain, seeing we have sworn by the LORD that we will not give them of our daughters to wives ?

Two methods of securing wives for Benjamin: (1) Maidens captured from Jabesh-gilead.—8. And they said, What one is there of the tribes of Israel that came not up to Mizpeh to the LORD ? And, behold, there came none to the camp from Jabesh-gilead to the assembly. 9. For the people were numbered, and, behold, there were none of the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead there. 10. And the congregation sent thither twelve thousand men of the valiantest, and commanded them, saying, Go and smite the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead with the edge of the sword, with the women and the children. 11. And this is the thing that ye shall do, Ye shall utterly destroy every male, and every married woman. 12. And they found among the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead four hundred young virgins ; and they

8. *Jabesh-gilead was on the east of Jordan, in Gad.*

brought them unto the camp of Shiloh, which is in the land of Canaan. 13. And the whole congregation sent some to speak to the children of Benjamin that were in the rock Rimmon, and to call peaceably unto them. 14. And Benjamin came again at that time; and they gave them wives which they had saved alive of the women of Jabesh-gilead: and yet so they sufficed them not. 15. And the people repented them for Benjamin, because that the LORD had made a breach in the tribes of Israel.

(2) *Rape of the Shilonite maidens.*—16. Then the elders of the congregation said, How shall we do for wives for them that remain, seeing the women are destroyed out of Benjamin? 17. And they said, There must be an inheritance for them that be escaped of Benjamin, that a tribe be not destroyed out of Israel. 18. Howbeit we may not give them wives of our daughters: for the children of Israel have sworn, saying, Cursed be he that giveth a wife to Benjamin. 19. Then they said, Behold, there is a feast of the LORD in Shiloh yearly in a place which is on the north side of Beth-el, on the east side of the highway that goeth up from Beth-el to Shechem, and on the south of Lebonah. 20. Therefore they commanded the children of Benjamin saying, Go and lie in wait in the vineyards; 21. and see, and, behold, if the daughters of Shiloh come out to dance in dances, then come ye out of the vineyards, and catch you every man his wife of the daughters of Shiloh, and go to the land of Benjamin. 22. And it shall be, when their fathers or their brethren come unto us to complain, that we will say unto them, Be favourable unto

19. Cp. the rape of the Sabine women, Livy, i. 9.

22. **Be favourable.** The text is difficult and corrupt. Translate (accepting one emendation of the text): "Grant them to them: for we did not take each his woman in the war: for had you given

them for our sakes : because we reserved not to each man his wife in the war : for ye did not give unto them at this time, that ye should be guilty. 23. And the children of Benjamin did so, and took them wives, according to their number, of them that danced, whom they *carried off* : and they went and returned unto their inheritance, and repaired the cities, and dwelt in them. 24. And the children of Israel departed thence at that time, every man to his tribe and to his family, and they went out from thence every man to his inheritance. 25. In those days there was no king in Israel : every man did that which was right in his own eyes.

RUTH

This “ idyllic glimpse of home life in ancient Israel ” forms a peaceful conclusion to the stormy period of the Judges, upon which the reader has been engaged. As the Pentateuch belongs to the first great volume of the Hebrews’ Bible (Torah), and as Joshua and Judges belong to the second (The Prophets, Nebhiim), so Ruth in the Hebrew Canon is included in the third volume (Kethubhim, or Sacred Writings). The date of its composition is uncertain. Dr. Driver refuses to accept the late date which some critics assign to it,¹ and considers that the beauty and

them to them, you would be guilty.” The meaning is : “ Grant the stolen maidens to their captors : for we did not procure for each of them a wife in the war at Jabesh-gilead, in which only four hundred were obtained. Had you now freely given your daughters to the Benjamites, you would be guilty of having broken your oath (ver. 1) ; but as your daughters have now been taken by force, you will not be guilty of perjury if you acquiesce.” (See Moore, *Judg.*, p. 451.)

¹ Dr. Driver disputes the idea that the book, since it looks with approval on Boaz’ marriage with a foreigner, was written in opposition to Ezra and Nehemiah, who insisted upon the suppression of these marriages (445 B.C.).

purity of the style point to a pre-Exilic date. Among the aims which the book was intended to serve are these : (1) To show how a daughter of the hostile Moab obtained an honourable position among Jehovah's people by faithful love and devotion to Israel's God, in spite of the prohibition in Deut. xxiii. 3 against the admission of a Moabite into the congregation of the Lord: (2) To enlarge the story of David's ancestry, which is but meagrely sketched in 1 Sam. xvi: (3) To inculcate the duty of marriage on the part of the next of kin¹ with a widow left childless.

To some extent the author has idealised his characters and scenes. "Distance seems to have mellowed the rude age of the Judges" in his eyes. "His principal characters are amiable and godfearing, and all in different ways show how a religious spirit may be carried unostentatiously into the conduct of daily life," (Dr. L.O.T., 425; Ott. 117; Murray's *I.B.D.*)

Ruth i.-iv

i. 1. Now it came to pass in the days when the judges ruled, that there was a famine in the land. And a certain man of Beth-lehem-judah went to sojourn in the country of Moab, he, and his wife, and his two sons. 2. And the name of the man was Elimelech, and the name of his wife Naomi, and the name of his two sons Mahlon and Chilion, Ephrathites of Beth-lehem-judah. And they came into the country of Moab, and continued there. 3. And Elimelech Naomi's husband died; and she was left, and her two sons. 4. And they took them wives of the women of

¹ Not the duty of levirate marriage (Deut. xxv. 5), which applies only to a brother-in-law.

i. 2. Ephrath is the ancient name of Bethlehem-judah, our Lord's birthplace.

Moab ; the name of the one was Orpah, and the name of the other Ruth : and they dwelled there about ten years. 5. And Mahlon and Chilion died also both of them ; and the woman was left of her two sons and her husband.

Naomi purposes to return to Bethlehem.—6. Then she arose with her daughters in law, that she might return from the country of Moab : for she had heard in the country of Moab how that the LORD had visited his people in giving them bread. 7. Wherefore she went forth out of the place where she was, and her two daughters in law with her ; and they went on the way to return unto the land of Judah. 8. And Naomi said unto her two daughters in law, Go, return each to her mother's house : the LORD deal kindly with you, as ye have dealt with the dead, and with me. 9. The LORD grant you that ye may find rest, each of you in the house of her husband. Then she kissed them ; and they lifted up their voice, and wept. 10. And they said unto her, Surely we will return with thee unto thy people. 11. And Naomi said, Turn again, my daughters : why will ye go with me ? are there yet any more sons in my womb, that they may be your husbands ? 12. Turn again, my daughters, go your way ; for I am too old to have an husband. If I should say, I have hope, if I should have an husband also to night, and should also bear sons ; 13. would ye tarry for them till they were grown ? would ye stay for them from having husbands ? nay, my daughters ; for it grieveth me much for your sakes that the hand of the LORD is gone out against me.

Ruth cannot bear to leave her.—14. And they lifted up their voice, and wept again : and Orpah kissed her mother in law ; but Ruth clave unto her. 15. And she said, Behold, thy sister in law is gone back unto her people,

and unto her gods : return thou after thy sister in law. 16. And Ruth said, Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee : for whither thou goest, I will go ; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge : thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God : 17. where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried : the LORD do so to me, and more also, if ought but death part thee and me. 18. When she saw that she was stedfastly minded to go with her, then she left speaking unto her.

19. So they two went until they came to Beth-lehem. And it came to pass, when they were come to Beth-lehem, that all the city was moved about them, and they said, Is this Naomi ? 20. And she said unto them, Call me not Naomi; call me Mara : for the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me. 21. I went out full; and the LORD hath brought me home again empty : why then call ye me Naomi, seeing the LORD hath testified against me, and the Almighty hath afflicted me ? 22. So Naomi returned, and Ruth the Moabitess, her daughter in law, with her, which had returned out of the country of Moab : and they came to Beth-lehem in the beginning of barley harvest.

Ruth gleans in Boaz' field.—ii. 1. And Naomi had a kinsman of her husband's, a mighty man of wealth, of the family of Elimelech ; and his name was Boaz. 2. And Ruth the Moabitess said unto Naomi, Let me now go to the field, and glean ears of corn after him in whose sight I shall find grace. And she said unto her, Go, my daughter. 3. And she went, and came, and gleaned in the field after the reapers : and her hap was to light on a part of the field belonging unto Boaz, who was of the kindred of Elimelech.

20. Naomi = pleasant, Mara = bitter.

Boaz is kind to her.—4. And, behold, Boaz came from Beth-lehem, and said unto the reapers, The LORD be with you. And they answered him, The LORD bless thee. 5. Then said Boaz unto his servant that was set over the reapers, Whose damsel is this? 6. And the servant that was set over the reapers answered and said, It is the Moabitish damsel that came back with Naomi out of the country of Moab: 7. and she said, I pray you, let me glean and gather after the reapers among the sheaves: so she came, and hath continued even from the morning until now, save that she tarried a little in the house. 8. Then said Boaz unto Ruth, Hearest thou not, my daughter? Go not to glean in another field, neither go from hence, but abide here fast by my maidens: 9. let thine eyes be on the field that they do reap, and go thou after them: have I not charged the young men that they shall not touch thee? and when thou art athirst, go unto the vessels, and drink of that which the young men have drawn. 10. Then she fell on her face, and bowed herself to the ground, and said unto him, Why have I found grace in thine eyes, that thou shouldest take knowledge of me, seeing I am a stranger? 11. And Boaz answered and said unto her, It hath fully been shewed me, all that thou hast done unto thy mother in law since the death of thine husband: and how thou hast left thy father and thy mother, and the land of thy nativity, and art come unto a people which thou knewest not heretofore. 12. The LORD recompense thy work, and a full reward be given thee of the LORD God of Israel, under whose wings thou

7. Ruth's request was made in accordance with the law of Lev. xix. 9, 10, which orders a landowner to leave the gleanings for the "poor and stranger."

art come to trust. 13. Then she said, Let me find favour in thy sight, my lord : for that thou hast comforted me, and for that thou hast spoken friendly unto thine handmaid, though I be not like unto one of thine handmaidens. 14. And Boaz said unto her, At meal-time come thou hither, and eat of the bread, and dip thy morsel in the vinegar. And she sat beside the reapers : and he reached her parched corn, and she did eat, and was sufficed, and left *thereof*. 15. And when she was risen up to glean, Boaz commanded his young men, saying, Let her glean even among the sheaves, and reproach her not : 16. and let fall also some of the handfuls of purpose for her, and leave them, that she may glean them, and rebuke her not. 17. So she gleaned in the field until even, and beat out that she had gleaned : and it was about an ephah of barley.

She continues to take advantage of his permission to glean.—18. And she took it up, and went into the city : and her mother in law saw what she had gleaned : and she brought forth, and gave to her that she had reserved after she was sufficed. 19. And her mother in law said unto her, Where hast thou gleaned to day ? and where wroughtest thou ? blessed be he that did take knowledge of thee. And she shewed her mother in law with whom she had wrought, and said, The man's name with whom I wrought to day is Boaz. 20. And Naomi said unto her daughter in law, Blessed be he of the LORD, who hath not left off his kindness to the living and to the dead. And Naomi said unto her, The man is near of kin unto us, one of our next kinsmen. 21. And Ruth the Moabitess said,

17. ephah = $6\frac{1}{2}$ gallons ; or, by another system of measurement, $8\frac{1}{2}$ gallons.

18 b. Seems to mean that Ruth brought home to Naomi the remainder of the food which Boaz had supplied her with in verse 14.

He said unto me also, Thou shalt keep fast by my young men, until they have ended all my harvest. 22. And Naomi said unto Ruth her daughter in law, It is good, my daughter, that thou go out with his maidens, that they meet thee not in any other field. 23. So she kept fast by the maidens of Boaz to glean until the end of barley harvest and of wheat harvest ; and dwelt with her mother in law.

In a quaint manner she claims Boaz' protection.—iii. 1. Then Naomi her mother in law said unto her, My daughter, shall I not seek rest for thee, that it may be well with thee ? 2. And now is not Boaz of our kindred, with whose maidens thou wast ? Behold, he winnoweth barley to night in the threshingfloor. 3. Wash thyself therefore, and anoint thee, and put thy raiment upon thee, and get thee down to the floor : but make not thyself known unto the man, until he shall have done eating and drinking. 4. And it shall be, when he lieth down, that thou shalt mark the place where he shall lie, and thou shalt go in, and uncover his feet, and lay thee down ; and he will tell thee what thou shalt do. 5. And she said unto her, All that thou sayest unto me I will do.

6. And she went down unto the floor, and did according to all that her mother in law bade her. 7. And when Boaz had eaten and drunk, and his heart was merry, he went to lie down at the end of the heap of corn : and she came softly, and uncovered his feet, and laid her down.

He acknowledges her rights of kinship.—8. And it came to pass at midnight, that the man was afraid, and turned himself : and, behold, a woman lay at his feet. 9. And

9. It is said to be still a custom with the Jews for a bride to be covered with the fringed garment belonging to the bridegroom, in token of his authority over her and obligation to protect her.

he said, Who art thou ? And she answered, I am Ruth thine handmaid: spread therefore thy skirt over thine handmaid ; for thou art a near kinsman. 10. And he said, Blessed be thou of the LORD, my daughter : for thou hast shewed more kindness in the latter end than at the beginning, inasmuch as thou followedst not young men, whether poor or rich. 11. And now, my daughter, fear not ; I will do to thee all that thou requirest : for all the city of my people doth know that thou art a virtuous woman. 12. And now it is true that I am thy near kinsman : howbeit there is a kinsman nearer than I. 13. Tarry this night, and it shall be in the morning, that if he will perform unto thee the part of a kinsman, well ; let him do the kinsman's part : but if he will not do the part of a kinsman to thee, then will I do the part of a kinsman to thee, as the LORD liveth : lie down until the morning.

He is bountiful to her.—14. And she lay at his feet until the morning : and she rose up before one could know another. And he said, Let it not be known that a woman came into the floor. 15. Also he said, Bring the vail that thou hast upon thee, and hold it. And when she held it, he measured six measures of barley, and laid it on her : and she went into the city. 16. And when she came to her mother in law, she said, *How hast thou fared*, my daughter ? And she told her all that the man had done to her. 17. And she said, These six measures of barley gave he me ; for he said to me, Go not empty unto thy mother in law. 18. Then said she, Sit still, my daughter, until thou know

10. The kindness shown in taking an old man like Boaz for her second husband was greater even than her devotion to Mahlon and his mother had been.

how the matter will fall: for the man will not be in rest, until he have finished the thing this day.

The other kinsman refuses to marry her.—iv. 1. Then went Boaz up to the gate, and sat him down there: and, behold, the kinsman of whom Boaz spake came by; unto whom he said, Ho, such a one! turn aside, sit down here. And he turned aside, and sat down. 2. And he took ten men of the elders of the city, and said, Sit ye down here. And they sat down. 3. And he said unto the kinsman, Naomi, that is come again out of the country of Moab, selleth a parcel of land, which was our brother Elimelech's: 4. and I thought to advertise thee, saying, Buy it before the inhabitants, and before the elders of my people. If thou wilt redeem it, redeem it: but if thou wilt not redeem it, then tell me, that I may know: for there is none to redeem it beside thee; and I am after thee. And he said, I will redeem it. 5. Then said Boaz, What day thou buyest the field of the hand of Naomi, thou must buy it also of Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of the dead, to raise up the name of the dead upon his inheritance.

An ancient custom.—6. And the kinsman said, I cannot redeem it for myself, lest I mar mine own inheritance: redeem thou my right to thyself; for I cannot redeem it. 7. Now this was the manner in former time in Israel

1. such a one—like our “So and so.” The author obviously did not know this kinsman's name.

5. thou must buy. The English translations miss the sense, which is preserved in the LXX: “When thou buyest the field of the hand of Naomi and from Ruth the Moabitess, thou must also buy Ruth herself,” etc. She would prove an encumbrance to himself and his family, so the kinsman refuses to take over either the land or Ruth (verse 6).

7. The modern method of conducting a legal transaction (exchange of land, etc.), is to set out the terms of it in a document which is signed by both parties, witnessed, stamped, and retained. Ancient methods were simpler and more concrete: some definite symbol,

concerning redeeming and concerning changing, for to confirm all things ; a man plucked off his shoe, and gave it to his neighbour : and this was a testimony in Israel. 8. Therefore the kinsman said unto Boaz, Buy it for *thyself*. So he drew off his shoe. 9. And Boaz said unto the elders, and unto all the people, Ye are witnesses this day, that I have bought all that was Elimelech's, and all that was Chilion's and Mahlon's, of the hand of Naomi. 10. Moreover Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of Mahlon, have I purchased to be my wife, to raise up the name of the dead upon his inheritance, that the name of the dead be not cut off from among his brethren, and from the gate of his place : ye are witnesses this day. 11. And all the people that were in the gate, and the elders, said, We are witnesses. The **LORD** make the woman that is come into thine house like Rachel and like Leah, which two did build the house of Israel : and do thou worthily in Ephratah, and be famous in Beth-lehem : 12. and let thy house be like the house of Pharez, whom Tamar bare unto Judah, of the seed which the **LORD** shall give thee of this young woman.

Marriage of Boaz and Ruth.—13. So Boaz took Ruth, and she was his wife : and when he went in unto her, the **LORD** gave her conception, and she bare a son. 14. And the women said unto Naomi, Blessed be the **LORD**, which

as a clod of earth, or here a shoe, was handed by one party to another. This act was seen by witnesses who would give their testimony if any subsequent doubt or dispute arose. Cf. *res mancipi* in Roman law and literature, and see Maine's *Ancient Law*, chaps. viii. and ix. For the necessity of taking Ruth over with the land cf. also the Roman *hereditas cum sacris*, i.e. a legacy with burdens attached to it, as opposed to *hereditas sine sacris*. For a ceremony somewhat similar to this, also with a shoe, see Deut. xxv. 5 seq. (the levirate law).

12. Pharez was one of Boaz' ancestors.

hath not left thee this day without a kinsman, that his name may be famous in Israel. 15. And he shall be unto thee a restorer of thy life, and a nourisher of thine old age: for thy daughter in law, which loveth thee, which is better to thee than seven sons, hath born him. 16. And Naomi took the child, and laid it in her bosom, and became nurse unto it. 17. And the women her neighbours gave it a name, saying, There is a son born to Naomi; and they called his name Obed: he is the father of Jesse, the father of David.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

THE GEOGRAPHY OF PALESTINE

It is advisable, when we read the history recorded in the books of the Old Testament, that we should constantly bear in mind certain points about the geography of the Holy Land.

1. POSITION.—It is at the extreme east of the Mediterranean, and forms a link between east and west, north and south, lying as it does on the main land-route between Egypt, Assyria, and Asia Minor. Indeed it is practically almost an isthmus, with the desert on one side and the sea on the other. So, in the history of the world, Hebrew and Jewish ideas have proved a connecting link between east and west, between the Semite and the Aryan.

2. SIZE.—The country was tiny, the distance from “Dan to Beer-sheba,” the phrase which was used to sum up the whole of Israel, being roughly 150 miles. The population was proportionately small ; and the Hebrews themselves at no time occupied anything like the whole of it. In the reign of Hezekiah, after the fall of Samaria, “Judah” means the comparatively few towns on the highlands round Jerusalem.

¹ The word “Hebrew” is used of the people of Israel throughout all their history. “Jew,” properly applicable only to the Southern Kingdom after the fall of Samaria, came to have a wider significance, until finally it denoted the whole race, as opposed to “the Gentiles,” or heathen nations.

3. FEATURES.—The country of Palestine is as peculiar and distinctive in its features as the people who occupied it. Passing eastward from the sea-coast we may mention the following divisions into which it naturally falls :

- (a) The Maritime Plain, containing (in order from south to north) Philistia, the Plain of Sharon, and Phœnicia. The Plain is broken by the range of Carmel, which juts out into the sea, and stretches inland in a south-easterly direction.
- (b) The Shephēlah, or lowlands, sloping up to the highlands, and intersected by many streams and their valleys, the chief of which is the Plain of Dothan.
- (c) The hill-country of Judah and Ephraim, to which the Hebrew population was in the main confined.
- (d) The great rift, called the Arābah, leading from Dan and the Waters of Merom, containing the Sea of Galilee, the River Jordan, and the Dead Sea, and issuing at last in the Gulf of Akāba, the north-east branch of the Red Sea. Much of this is considerably below sea-level ; the Dead Sea, which is very salt, is 1,292 feet below the Mediterranean.
- (e) East of the Jordan the land rises again very quickly, and only a very narrow strip intervenes before the desert is reached.

APPENDIX II

OUR LORD'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE PENTATEUCH

At the time of our Lord the opinion generally held was that Moses was the author of the Pentateuch. This

opinion was shared by our Lord Himself. It is consequently sometimes argued that the critical view of the authorship sketched in the Introduction, which is supported by overwhelming evidence, must yet be discarded in submission to our Lord's authority. To hold this position, however, is to misunderstand the essential humanity of our Lord. He was perfect God and perfect Man. He was, as perfect Man, naturally subject to all the ordinary limitations of manhood. He accepted, with His Manhood, the intellectual apparatus of His time. Knowledge of the actual composition of the Pentateuch was *not* part of the intellectual apparatus of His time: it has been gained, under the direction of the Spirit of God, only in recent years. Had our Lord, as Man, known all that man now knows, He would not then have been complete man: He would have been, as Man, omniscient. But we are taught that at His Incarnation He emptied Himself, and in the Gospels it is made clear that part of His *κένωσις*, or "emptying of Himself," consisted in His subjecting Himself, as Man, to the possession of that knowledge only which was possible to His age, and that He *learned* according to ordinary human methods (Luke ii. 52; Mark xiii. 32, etc.). "With respect to His knowledge, we can venture the statement that though, as God, He never ceased to be omniscient, yet he *refused to know*, as Man, anything which could not be learnt by human means."¹ It is, therefore, unjust to quote our Lord as an authority against the post-Mosaic authorship of these books. On the other hand, it may here be mentioned that our Lord, by His interpretations of the Old Testament and by exhibiting, with a "high superiority," His positive disregard of many

¹ Mc.N. *Ex.*, pp. x, xi.

observances of the Law, constituted Himself in reality the first Critic of the Old Testament.¹

APPENDIX III

THE LITERARY USE OF MOSES' NAME IN THE CODES

An objection to the view of the growth of Hebrew legislation adopted in this book is sometimes made on the ground that if Moses was not the real author of the Codes which bear his name, his name and authority were falsely assumed from interested motives by the publishers of the Codes, who must have foisted literary and legislative forgeries upon an unsuspecting public. This objection has been fully answered in detail by Dr. Driver in his edition of Deuteronomy, pp. lv *seq.* It will be sufficient here to remark (1) that it was traditional with the Hebrews to regard the laws promulgated at different periods of their history as expansions of the original Mosaic nucleus, which indeed they were. The stream was identified with the source, and to attribute new laws, or extensions of the old law which circumstances demanded, to Moses was not, therefore, "a proceeding out of harmony with the ideas and practice of the Hebrew nation." No one in the time of Josiah would have regarded the promulgation of an enlarged code under Moses' name as a misuse of Moses' authority. Students of Greek history will remember a similar convention at Athens, where it was the custom to refer to admittedly recent statutes as portions of the

¹ See also G. Adam Smith, *Modern Criticism and the Preaching of O.T.*, pp. 11-14.

traditional Solonian legislation. (2) It is in all ages a familiar literary device, which bears not the slightest suggestion of deception, to put speeches into the mouth of the great characters of past history or to cast a book into a dramatic form in which one of the great historical personages plays protagonist. Thus Plato speaks through the lips of Socrates ; the Alexandrian religious philosopher of the second century B.C. through the mouth of "the son of David, king in Jerusalem," *i.e.* Solomon (Eccles. i. 1) ; and their collection of religious poetry is known among the Jews as "the Psalms of David." In the same way Moses' name would naturally and appropriately have been used.

APPENDIX IV

JEPHTHAH'S DAUGHTER

It is hardly necessary seriously to combat a view, entertained in some quarters, that the sacrifice of Jephthah's daughter suggests the probability of human sacrifice being recognised among the institutions of Jehovah-worship in the days of the Judges. Debased as the Hebrews of the period were by contact with idolatrous neighbours, such a theory has no shadow of foundation. Throughout the whole of the Old Testament the teaching that Jehovah utterly abominates and forbids human sacrifice forms one of the cardinal features which distinguish and demonstrate the moral superiority of Jehovah's religion above the religions of Israel's neighbours.

That the custom of human sacrifice was widely spread in the ancient world admits of no doubt. It was practised

among the Phœnicians, Carthaginians, Moabites (2 Kings iii. 27), and others. To sacrifice a firstborn son to the deity was a surrender which was considered of the highest efficacy in propitiating him. It would, therefore, have seemed perfectly natural to the most primitive Hebrews had this demand been made of them by their God: in practice, however, Jehovah did take the firstborn, but gave it back to its parents on payment of a redemption price. He would have no taking of a human life (*cp.* Exod. xxii. 29, with xxxiv. 20; and for the connection between this idea and the Passover sacrifice, see Mc.N. *Ex.*, xli, 66 *seq.*, etc.).

So when Abraham was commanded to offer up his only son, the moral and religious ideas of his age were such that he could, though we could not, recognise such a command as Divine. But the precise point is here, as before, that in fact Jehovah would *not* allow the human sacrifice to take place. He showed that what He expected in its place was a higher and purer thing—the submission of the will and the self-sacrifice of perfect obedience.

Again, in later days, when some of the kings, such as Ahaz and Manasseh, actually resorted to this practice (2 Kings xvi. 3, xxi. 6; Jer. vii. 31; Ezek. xvi. 20, etc., see Dr. *Gen.*, p. 221), it was in exact contravention of the precepts of their religion, and in despite of the strenuous prohibitions of legislators (Deut. xii. 31, xviii. 10; Lev. xx. 25), and the condemnations of prophets (Mic. vi. 7 *seq.*).

Human life was unflinchingly taken (Achan, etc.), or threatened (Saul and Jonathan, 1 Sam. xiv. 24) by way of penalty, but never as a sacrifice.

In the case of Jephthah, therefore, not only do the considerations here urged dispose of the theory that his

daughter's sacrifice *could be* recognised as a religious act ; but, further, the whole tenor of the narrative disproves the notion that the Hebrews of that degenerate age were so oblivious of the real teaching of their religion that they actually *did* recognise it as such. The only reason why the incident was put on record at all was because it was remarkable and reprehensible in the eyes of the narrator. And the fact that a public and recurring period of mourning was instituted in memory of it, stamps the deed as appearing lamentable, unusual, and discreditable in the sight of Jephthah's contemporaries.



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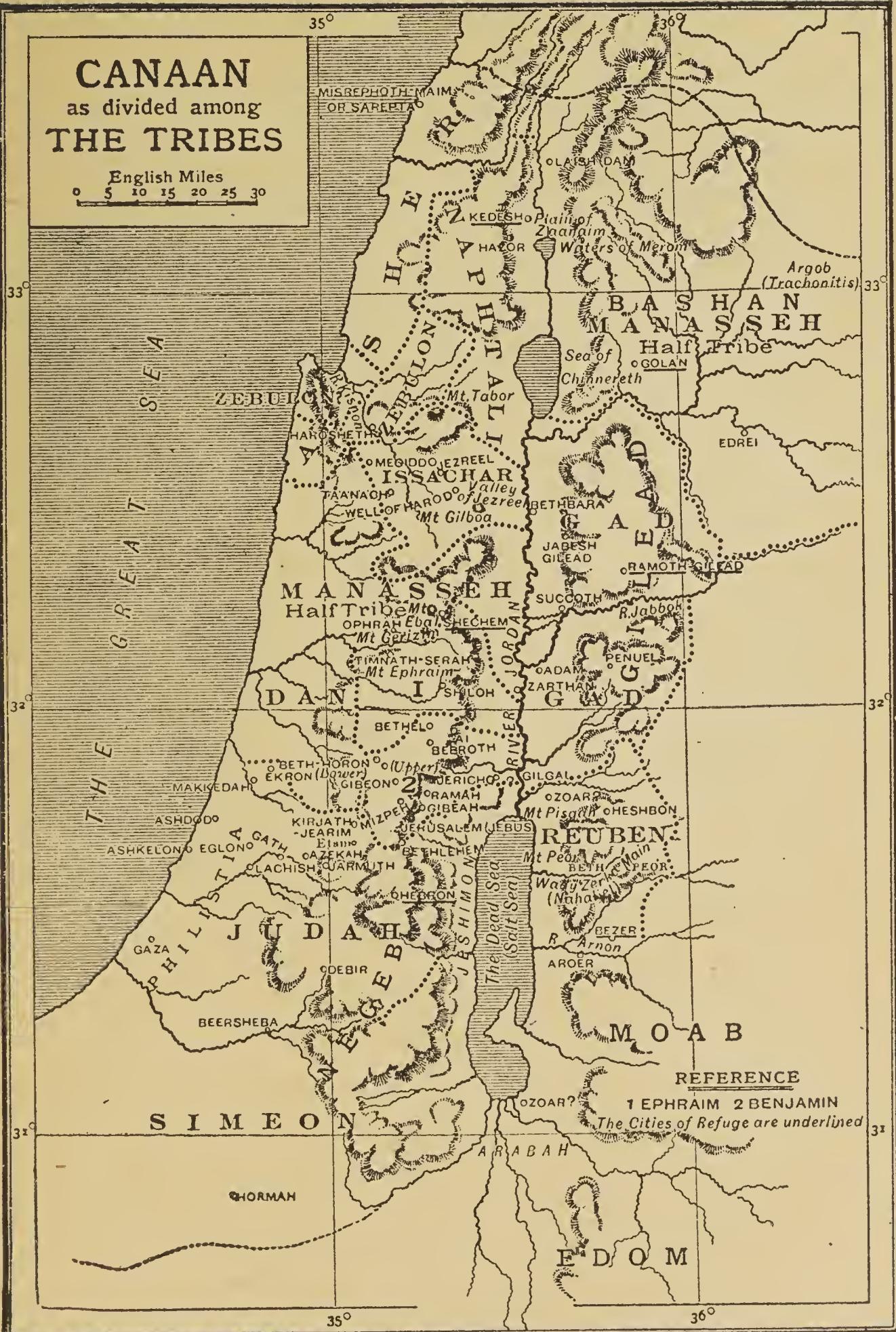
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